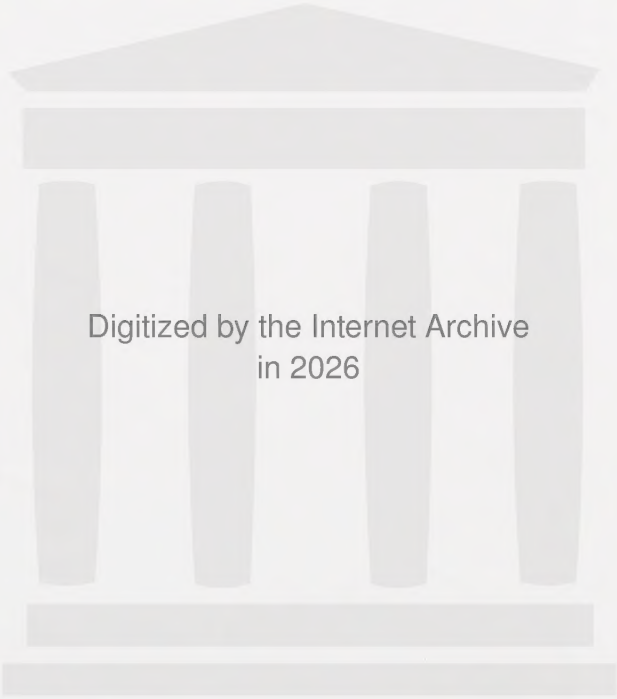
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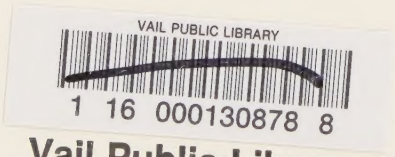

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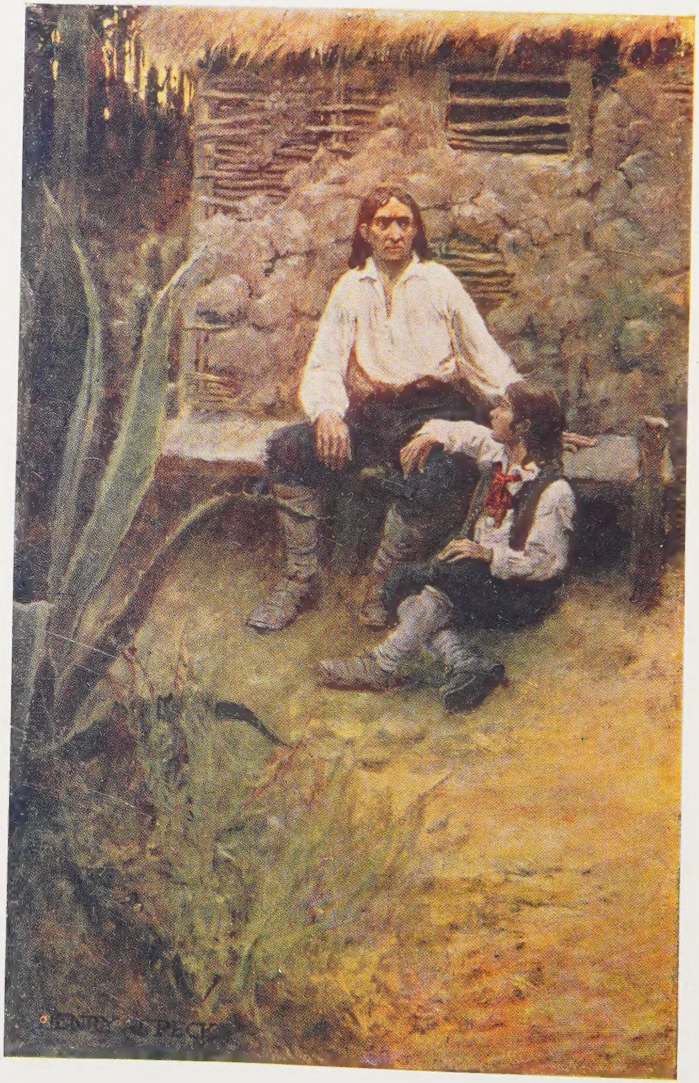

Mrs. Hemans

"The voices of my home—I hear them still."
—"A Forest Sanctuary"

A Library of Poetical Literature

IN THIRTY-TWO VOLUMES

Felicia Hemans

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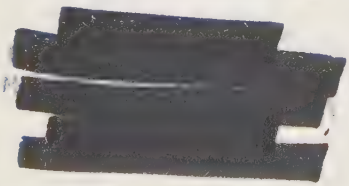
With a Critical and Biographical Introduction by W. M. Rossetti, and a Frontispiece in Color by Henry J. Peck



P. F. COLLIER & SON

NEW YORK CITY

PREFATORY NOTICE.

Sentiment without passion, and suffering without objection —these, along with a deep religious sense, and with the gifts of a brilliant mind taking the poetical direction through eager sympathy and some genuine vocation, constitute the life of Mrs. Hemans.[1] Whatever may be the deservings of the poems in other respects, they do not fail to convey to the reader a certain impression of beauty, felt to be inherent as much in the personality of the authoress as in her writings: they show as being the outcome of a beautiful life, and in fact they are so. The impression which the reader will thus have received from perusing the poems is not only confirmed but intensified when he knows the events of the writer's life.

Felicia Dorothea Browne, born in Duke Street, Liverpool, on the 25th of September, 1793, was daughter of a merchant of considerable eminence, a native of Ireland, belonging to a branch of the Sligo family. Her mother, whose maiden name was Wagner, was partly Italian and partly German by extraction, her father having held the post of Consul at Liverpool for the Austrian and Tuscan Governments. The surname Wagner was in reality a corruption from the illustrious Venetian name Veniero, borne by three Doges, and by the Commander of the fleet of the Republic at the great battle of Lepanto. Felicia was the fifth child in a family of seven, of whom one died in infancy; she was distinguished, almost from her cradle, by extreme beauty and precocious talents. "The full glow of that

[1] The Memoir of Mrs. Hemans, written by her sister Mrs. Hughes, and prefixed to the edition of the Poems in 7 vols. published by Messrs. Blackwood, is the best authority for the facts of the poet's life. There are also the *Memorials* by Mr. Chorley in 2 vols., containing a good deal of Mrs. Hemans's correspondence (reproduced to a large extent by Mrs. Hughes), and mostly bearing on her literary career rather than the circumstances of her private life. The former of these accounts is pleasantly written, in a tone of deep affection, and admiration as well, at which the reader will not be disposed to cavil.

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radiant beauty which was destined to fade so early" is one of the expressions used by the poetess's sister in describing the former at the age of fifteen. This reference to "early fading" appears to be intended to apply rather to the death of Mrs. Hemans when only in her forty-second year, and to the ravages of disease in the few years preceding, than to any loss of comeliness in mature womanhood. An engraved portrait of her by the American artist William E. West, one of three which he painted in 1827, shows us that Mrs. Hemans, at the age of thirty-four, was eminently pleasing and good-looking, with an air of amiability and sprightly gentleness, and of confiding candor which, while none the less perfectly womanly, might almost be termed childlike in its limpid depth. The features are correct and harmonious; the eyes full; and the contour amply and elegantly rounded. In height she was neither tall nor short. A sufficient wealth of naturally clustering hair, golden in early youth, but by this time of a rich auburn, shades the capacious but not over-developed forehead, and the lightly-pencilled eyebrows. The bust and form have the fulness of a mature period of life; and it would appear that Mrs. Hemans was somewhat short-necked and high-shouldered, partly detracting from delicacy of proportion, and of general aspect or impression on the eye. We would rather judge of her by this portrait (which her sister pronounces a good likeness) than by another engraved in Mr. Chorley's memorials. This latter was executed in Dublin in 1831 by a young artist named Edward Robinson. It makes Mrs. Hemans look younger than in the earlier portrait by West, and may on that ground alone be surmised unfaithful; and, though younger, it also makes her heavier and less refined.

The childhood of Felicia Browne was probably rendered all the happier by a commercial reverse which befell her father before she was seven years of age. The family hereupon removed to Wales, and for nine years they lived at Gwrych[1] near Abergele in Denbighshire, close to the sea and amid mountains. This was the very scene for the poetically-minded child to enjoy,

[1] So spelled by Mrs. Hughes; "Grwych" by Mr. Chorley.

and to have her powers nurtured by : a great love of nature, and in particular an affectionate delight in Wales, its people and associations, constantly traceable in her writings, followed as an almost necessary consequence. Her mother, a most amiable and excellent woman, fully qualified to carry on her daughter's education, devoted the most careful attention to this object, and was repaid by an unswerving depth and constancy of love. A large library was kept in the house, and Felicia drew heavily upon its stores : a pretty picture is presented to the mind's eye, and would not be unworthy of realization by art, in the anecdote that it was her habit, at the age of six, to read Shakspeare while seated in the branches of an apple-tree.—Along with great rapidity of comprehension, she had a memory of surprising retentiveness, and would repeat whole pages of poetry after a single reading. At the age of about eleven she passed a winter in London, and was there again in the following year—never afterwards.

In 1808—age fourteen—Felicia first appears as an authoress. She published a volume of poems which got abused in some review : this was the only time that really harsh criticism befell her. The mishap so far affected the impressionable damsel as to keep her in bed some days : but she surmounted it pretty soon and resumed writing. In the same year she wrote a poem named *England and Spain;* being then under the influence of military enthusiasm arising from the events of the Peninsular War, in which one of her brothers was serving : another of them was also in the army, and in the same regiment, the 23d Royal Welsh Fusileers. The next year was a momentous one in the life of Felicia Browne. She met Captain Hemans, of the 4th (or King's Own) Regiment, an officer not rich in purse, but having advantages, as we are informed, both of person and education : he professed admiration of the bewitching girl, and she gave him her love. He shortly had to return to Spain ; and nearly three years elapsed before they again met. Meanwhile, in 1809, the Browne family removed to Bronwylfa, near St. Asaph in Flintshire ; and in 1812, for the second and last time, appeared a volume of poetry bearing the name of Felicia Dorothea Browne, *The Domestic Affections,*

and Other Poems. In the summer of 1812 she married the man of her choice.

Biographers have not permitted us to know distinctly whether or not the conjugal life of Mrs. Hemans was happy, or what Captain Hemans might possibly have found to say on the subject: at any rate, it was a short one, practically speaking. The wedded couple resided at first at Daventry in Northamptonshire, where the Captain was Adjutant to the County Militia: here they remained about a year, and here was born their son Arthur, the first of a family of five, all of whom were boys. They then went to live with Mrs. Hemans's own family at Bronwylfa; her mother was now at the head of the house, as her father, having resumed the mercantile career, had gone out to Quebec, where finally he died. In 1818 Captain Hemans resolved to go to the south of Europe "for the sake of his health"—a very inconvenient motive, or a highly convenient one, according to circumstances: he had suffered much from the vicissitudes of a military life, especially during the retreat to Corunna, and afterwards through fever caught in the Walcheren expedition. He departed just before the birth of his fifth son; went to Rome; and there settled down. The parting proved to be a final one. It might have been fancied that even the shattered frame of a young officer who had survived Corunna and Walcheren would suffice for the effort of coming to Wales, England, or Ireland, at some time between 1818 and 1835, so as to rebehold a wife whom he had left in the bloom of youth and loveliness, and whose literary fame, for many years succeeding his departure, lent an ever-brightening lustre to the name of Hemans, and so as to get a glimpse of his five promising boys. But this was not to be: for some reason or other, not defined to us, even the charms of Bronwylfa, with a wife, five sons, and a resident mother-in-law, did not relax the tenacious grasp which Italy and Rome obtained on Captain Hemans. Or again it might have seemed conceivable that not only Captain Hemans but also his wife, the author of *Lays of Many Lands*, sensitive to the historic and romantic associations of such a country as Italy, would find it compatible with her liking as well as her duties to pay a visit to Rome, or possibly to

make it her permanent dwelling-place. As to this, it may perhaps be inferred, in a general way, that the family affections of daughter and mother were more dominant and vivid in Mrs. Hemans than conjugal love: her intense feeling of the sacredness of home, which it would be both idle and perverse to contest, may have set before her, as more binding and imperative, the duties of service to her own mother, and of guidance to her own children, than the more equal, passionate, and in some sense self-indulgent relation between wife and husband. However, abandoning conjecture, it may be best here to transcribe the reticent hints on the subject which are given by the poetess's sister, Mrs. Hughes, in her Memoir, and which show that the *de facto* separation between Captain and Mrs. Hemans depended partly upon general considerations of family obligation, and partly upon special circumstances not clearly indicated, but apparently reflecting more or less on the marital deportment of the Captain. "It has been alleged, and with perfect truth, that the literary pursuits of Mrs. Hemans, and the education of her children, made it more eligible for her to remain under the maternal roof than to accompany her husband to Italy. It is, however, unfortunately but too well known that such were not the only reasons which led to this divided course. To dwell on this subject would be unnecessarily painful; yet it must be stated that nothing like a permanent separation was contemplated at the time, nor did it ever amount to more than a tacit conventional arrangement which offered no obstacle to the frequent interchange of correspondence, nor to a constant reference to their father in all things relating to the disposal of her boys. But years rolled on—seventeen years of absence, and consequently alienation; and, from this time to the hour of her death, Mrs. Hemans and her husband never met again."

With this incident of the lifelong separation between her husband and herself, anything of a romantic character in the occurrences of Mrs. Hemans's career comes to a close; although the coloring of high-toned romance in her mind and writings never died out, but to the last continued to permeate, enliven, and beautify, that other element and staple of her life, its sweet

and earnest domesticity. Now we have only to contemplate the loving daughter, glad, as long as fate permitted, to escape being the head of a household, although invested with the matronly dignity proper to the motherhood of five boys. We see in her the not less deeply affectionate, tender, and vigilant mother; the admired and popular poetess, distinguished and soon burdened by applause; shortly afterwards the cureless invalid, marked out for an early death, towards which she progresses with a lingering but undeviating rapidity—calm in conscience, bright and cheerful in mind, full of faith and hope for eternity, and of the gentlest charities of life for her brief residue of time.

In 1818, before the departure of her husband, Mrs. Hemans had published a volume of poetical Translations; and about the same time she wrote *The Restoration of the Works of Art to Italy*, and *Modern Greece*, and other poems which were afterwards included in the series named *Tales and Historic Scenes*. In 1820 she brought out *The Sceptic:* a mild performance which some still milder-minded disbeliever found of convincing efficacy, assuring Mrs. Hemans, in a personal interview not long before her death, that it had wrought his conversion to the Christian religion. In the same year she made the acquaintance of the Rev. Reginald (afterwards Bishop) Heber, then Rector of Hodnet—the first eminent literary personage whom she knew well. He encouraged her in the composition of another poem destined to extirpate religious error, entitled *Superstition and Revelation:* it had been begun some while before this, and was never distinctly abandoned, but remained uncompleted. Towards this time also Mrs. Hemans wrote a set of papers in the *Edinburgh Monthly Magazine* on Foreign Literature; almost the only prose that she ever published, and serving chiefly as a vehicle for poetic translations. She obtained two literary prizes for poems, and her ambition was equal to the composition of a five-act tragedy intended for stage representation—*The Vespers of Palermo*. This was a work that occupied some time. At last, after she had received £210 for the copyright of the tragedy, it was produced at Covent Garden

Theatre on the 12th of December, 1823. No doubt the authoress's own hopes were not altogether low as to the success of the piece, and her friends were in high expectancy. Young and Charles Kemble took the principal male characters: Miss Kelly appeared as Constance. The acting of this lady is said, fairly or unfairly, to have been disastrous to the piece: it proved "all but a failure," and was withdrawn after the opening night, and never reproduced in London. Not long afterwards, however, the tragedy was acted in Edinburgh, and with a considerable measure of success. A dispassionate reader of the present day—if indeed there exists a reader of *The Vespers of Palermo*—will probably opine that the London audience showed at least as much discrimination (apart from any question as to demerit in Miss Kelly) as that in Edinburgh. Mrs. Hemans's talent was not of the dramatic kind. Perhaps there never yet was a good five-act stage tragedy written by a woman; and certainly the peculiar tone and tint of Mrs. Hemans's faculty were not such as to supply the deficiency which she, merely as a woman, was almost certain to evince. Even as a narrative poet, not to speak of the drama, she shows to no sort of advantage: her personages not having anything of a *full-bodied* character, but wavering between the romantically criminal and the longwindedly virtuous—poor supposititious creatures, inflated and diluted. Something better may nevertheless be said for the second of her tragedies, *The Siege of Valencia*, published in 1823 along with *Belshazzar's Feast* and some other poems. This play appears to have been written without any view to the stage: a condition of writing which acts detrimentally upon a drama composed by a born dramatist, but which may rather have the opposite effect upon one coming from a different sort of author. In *The Siege of Valencia* the situation is in a high degree tragical—even terrible or harrowing: and there is this advantage,—no small one in the case of a writer such as Mrs. Hemans—that, while the framework is historical, and the crisis and passions of a genuinely heroic type, the immediate interest is personal or domestic. Mrs. Hemans may be credited with a good and unhackneyed choice

of subject in this drama, and with a well-concerted adaptation of it to her own more special powers: the writing is fairly sustained throughout, and there are passages both vigorous and moving. As the reader approaches the *dénouement*, and finds the authoress dealing death with an unsparing hand to the heroically patriotic Gonzalez and all his offspring, he may perhaps at first feel a little ruffled at noting that the only member of the family who has been found wanting in the fiery trial—wanting through an excess of maternal love—is also the only one saved alive: but in this also the authoress may be pronounced in the right. Reunion with her beloved ones in death would in fact have been mercy to Elmina, and would have left her undistinguished from the others, and untouched by any retribution: survival, mourning, and self-discipline, are the only chastisement in which a poetic justice, in its higher conception, could be expressed.—Besides the two dramas of *The Vespers of Palermo* and *The Siege of Valencia*, Mrs. Hemans began likewise two others—*De Châtillon, or the Crusaders*, and *Sebastian of Portugal*: neither of these was finished.

Soon before the production of *The Vespers of Palermo* on the stage, she had taken up with great zest the study of the German language; and her *Lays of Many Lands*, published in 1826, were to a considerable extent suggested by Herder's work, *Stimmen der Völker in Lieder*. The same volume contained her poem of *The Forest Sanctuary*, which had occupied her in the latter part of 1824 and commencement of 1825: this she was disposed to regard as her finest work. It is the most important of her narrative or semi-narrative poems, and, as compared with the others of that class, may reasonably claim a preference, without our committing ourselves to any very high eulogium upon it. The *Records of Woman* followed in 1828, being of the first of the authoress's works that Messrs. Blackwood published: into this series she put more of her personal feeling than into any of the others. In the summer of 1830 appeared the *Songs of the Affections*, being the last of her publications prior to her departure for Ireland.

Meanwhile the course of her private life had been marked

only by such variations as removal of residence, and by one deep and irreparable affliction in the death of her beloved mother on the 11th of January, 1827, followed soon afterwards by the failure of her own health. The first removal, in the spring of 1825, had been from Bronwylfa to Rhyllon, a house distant from the former only about a quarter of a mile : here she settled along with her mother, sister, and four boys—the eldest son being then at a school at Bangor. For a time also her second brother, Major Browne, afterwards Commissioner of Police in Dublin, and his wife, resided in the same house, on their return from Canada. Rhyllon, though with attractive surroundings, was a much less picturesque house than Bronwylfa ; but this brief period of Mrs. Hemans's life proved to be probably the happiest that she had passed since childhood. Besides many sources of tranquil domestic satisfaction, and for a while a somewhat firmer condition of her own health, she was in the enjoyment of a considerable reputation not now confined to her native country, for the fame of her poems had spread to America, and flourished there with extraordinary vigor. She was at one time invited to emigrate to Boston, and there conduct a periodical under an arrangement which would have secured her an income. Her literary correspondence became very large ; and gradually the urgencies of editors of annuals, owners of albums, and other such predacious assailants of leisure and patience, besieged and waylaid her to a burdensome and harassing extent. In the summer of 1828 she paid a visit to some friends at Wavertree Lodge, near Liverpool. Her health was now exceedingly frail, with palpitation of the heart, and inflammatory and other distressing symptoms, frequently aggravated by her exceeding carelessness in all matters affecting herself. Her friends induced her to take medical advice, and she was directed to assume a reclining posture as often as practicable. Another consequence of this visit was her resolution to move to the village of Wavertree, chiefly with a view to the better education of her three younger boys : the two others, at the same time that their mother quitted Wales in the autumn, went away to Rome, to the care of their father. Mrs. Hemans's

sister had married, her brother was appointed to a post in Ireland and the cherished Welsh home was thus irremediably broken up. The residence at Wavertree, however, turned out unsatisfactory; Mrs. Hemans did not find it healthy for herself, nor its educational advantages equal to her expectations. She had some friends in Liverpool whom she liked, more especially the Chorley family; but for the most part was oppressed by the importunities of undiscerning and uncongenial neighbors, upon whom, moreover, she often failed even to produce a favorable impression. She was regarded as odd—"wore a veil on her head, like no one else" (as is shown indeed in Mr. West's portrait of her): and she, for her part, could hardly be induced to go into any general society, and would fain have got a friend "to procure her a dragon to be kept in her courtyard," as a protection against intruders. Her house was itself very small, and on her arrival comfortless; but she managed to make it comparatively elegant. She now conceived a great passion for music, and, in the winter of 1830 and ensuing spring, applied herself to the study of the art under Zeugheer Herrmann, receiving also some assistance from a well-known amateur, Mr. Lodge. She so far cultivated her faculty in music as to be able to invent airs for some of her own lyrics. Playing on the harp and the pianoforte had been among her earlier accomplishments: and her voice was naturally good, but failed in youth owing to the weakness of her chest.

The residence at Wavertree was varied by excursions to Scotland and to the Lake country. In July, 1829, she paid a visit to Mr. Hamilton, the author of *Cyril Thornton*, at Chiefswood near Abbotsford, and saw a great deal of Sir Walter Scott. Two of his kindly compliments to Mrs. Hemans have been preserved in her sister's record. "I should say you had too many gifts, Mrs. Hemans; were they not all made to give pleasure to those around you: and afterwards at leave-taking, "There are some whom we meet, and should like ever after to claim as kith and kin; and you are one of those." The Scotch trip included visits to Yarrow, Abbotsford, and Edinburgh, and sitting for a bust to Mr. Angus Fletcher. The excursion to the

Lakes of Westmoreland took place in the following year, 1830 : the poetess went to Wordsworth's house, Rydal Mount, with her son Charles ; and on afterwards moving to a neighboring cottage named Dove's Nest overlooking Winandermere, was joined by her two other boys from Wavertree. Mrs. Hemans's letters show how much she liked Wordsworth, both poetically and personally : she found him more impulsive than she had expected, and greatly enjoyed his fine reading, and the frequent touches of poetry in his talk. Nor was her admiration unresponded to, as proved by the lines which Wordsworth devoted to her memory but a few years afterwards—

> " Mourn rather for that holy spirit
> Sweet as the spring, as ocean deep ;
> For her who ere her summer faded
> Has sunk into a breathless sleep."

She left Dove's Nest towards the middle of August, and revisited Scotland, and then re-entered Wales by way of Dublin and Holyhead.

As the experiment of Wavertree had proved disappointing, and as her brother Major Browne was now settled in Ireland, Mrs. Hemans determined to take up her residence in Dublin from the following spring. In the late autumn of 1830 therefore she saw her last of Bronwylfa, and towards the close of April, 1831, she quitted Wavertree and England, never (as it was fated) to return. She passed a few weeks in Dublin ; then stayed at her brother's house, the Hermitage, near Kilkenny ; and in the early autumn was finally domiciled in the Irish capital. At first she dwelt in upper Pembroke Street ; afterwards in No. 36 Stephen's Green ; and thirdly at a house which proved more comfortable, and in which her life came to a close, 20 Dawson Street. In Dublin, as before at Wavertree, Mrs. Hemans lived retired from society, but in familiar intercourse with a few sterling friends, among whom were Sir William Rowan Hamilton, Archbishop and Mrs. Whately, and the Rev. Blanco White. Her health was in a very shattered state, the palpitation of the heart continuing, and being attended by fre-

quent fainting-fits. Every now and then, however, she rallied, and it was still possible for her friends to flatter their hearts with hope ; and the gentle sweetness and even playfulness of her temper, mingled with tender sentiment and ever-deepening religious impressions never failed her. She now had to pass a great part of her time lying on a sofa.

After her settlement in Ireland Mrs. Hemans published the following volumes of poetry—her prevailing tendency being at this period towards themes of a religious character. Early in 1834, *The Hymns for Childhood* were first issued from the home press, in Dublin,—having previously, however, as far back as 1824, appeared in an American edition. The *National Lyrics* were collected, and produced by the same Dublin publishers, almost simultaneously with the *Hymns for Childhood ;* and were succeeded, at no long interval, by the *Scenes and Hymns of Life*, which volume obtained much applause. This was the last publication during her lifetime. She afterwards wrote *Despondency and Aspiration*, and dictated the series of sonnets named *Thoughts during Sickness :* the last composition of all was the *Sabbath Sonnet*, produced on the 26th of April, only twenty days prior to her death.

The other events of the last two years of Mrs. Hemans's life may be very briefly summarized : fatal illness, and the attentions of relatives and friends, are nearly all that the record includes. Not only her brother and his wife, but also her sister Mrs. Hughes, with the husband of the latter, were with her with more or less continuity. In May, 1833, her son Claude went to America, to engage in commercial life ; another son, Willoughby, was employed on the Ordnance Survey in the north of Ireland : Charles, and during his holidays Henry, tended her affectionately. The latter, shortly before his mother's death, was unexpectedly appointed to a clerkship in the Admiralty by Sir Robert Peel, who added "a most munificent donation." In July, 1834, Mrs. Hemans caught a fever : she went to the county of Wicklow for the sake of her health, but here another illness, scarlet fever, assailed her. Returning to Dublin, and being ordered to pass as much time as possible in the

open air, she caught a cold, through having sat out too long reading in the gardens of the Dublin Society, where an autumnal fog overtook her : the cold was followed by ague, and this, with a hectic fever which supervened, may be regarded as the final stage in her disease, now mainly of a dropsical character. At the beginning of March, 1835, after spending some while at Redesdale, the seat of her attached friends the Whatelys, she returned to Dublin, having almost lost the use of her limbs ; and on the 16th of May, without a sigh or movement, she ceased to live. She lies buried in St. Anne's Church, Dublin.

Mrs. Hemans, while sprightly, versatile, and conversible, was not the less of a very retiring disposition, shrinking from self-display, and the commonplaces of a public reputation. Her character was extremely guileless. Notwithstanding her exceeding sensitiveness—which extended not only to the affections and interests of life, but to such outer matters as the sound of the wind at night, the melancholy of the seashore, and in especial (though there was no reason for this in any personal occurrences) to the sadness of burials at sea—she was yet very free from mere ordinary nervous alarms. "My spirits," she once wrote, "are as variable as the lights and shadows now flitting with the winds over the high grass, and sometimes the tears gush into my eyes when I can scarcely define the cause. I put myself in mind of an Irish melody sometimes, with its quick and wild transitions from sadness to gayety." Her conversation was various and brilliant, with a total freedom from literary pretence. She had a strong perception of the ludicrous, but abstained from sarcasm or ill-nature, more especially as weapons against any who had injured or neglected her ; and personal or invidious literary gossip was her aversion. She would not permit herself to be vexed at small things : but was wont to quote the saying of Madame l'Espinasse (applying it no doubt chiefly to the severance of her matrimonial ties) "Un grand chagrin tue tout le reste." She had a keen dislike to any sort of coarseness in conversation or in books, and would often tear out peccant pages from volumes in her possession. Her accomplishments were considerable, and not merely superficial. She

knew French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and in mature life German, and was not unacquainted with Latin. She had some taste and facility not only in music (as already referred to) but likewise in drawing ; and some of her sketches of localities have served for vignettes in the copyright edition of her complete works.[1] Her poetry was often written with a readiness approaching improvisation ; this she felt as in some degree a blemish, and towards the close of her life she regretted having often had to write in a haphazard way, so as to supply means for the education of her sons. Byron, Shelley, and Madame de Staël, were among the writers she was in the habit of quoting. Jealousy of contemporary female writers, prominent in the public eye, was unknown to her gentle and true-hearted nature ; Miss Jewsbury (afterwards Mrs. Fletcher) was among her intimates, and she indulged herself in friendly correspondence with Miss Baillie, Miss Mitford, Mrs. Howitt, and others. The first-named of these ladies, Mrs. Fletcher (whose death preceded that of her friend by about a year), has, in her book named *The Three Histories*, described Mrs. Hemans under the name of Egeria ; and as the faithfulness of the portrait, allowing for some degree of idealization, is attested by Mrs. Hughes, I am induced to repeat it here :—"Egeria was totally different from any other woman I had ever seen, either in Italy or England. She did not dazzle, she subdued me. Other women might be more commanding, more versatile, more acute : but I never saw one so exquisitely feminine. Her birth, her education, but above all the genius with which she was gifted, combined to inspire a passion for the ethereal, the tender, the imaginative, the heroic—in one word the beautiful. It was in her a faculty divine, and yet of daily life ; it touched all things, but, like a sunbeam, touched them with a 'golden finger.' Anything abstract or scientific was unintelligible and distasteful to her. Her knowledge was extensive and various ; but, true to the first principle of her nature, it was poetry that she sought in history, scenery, character, and religious belief—

[1] In the present edition some few poems have had to be omitted as still copyright ; and others for the purpose of bringing the material into one moderate-sized volume. These are chiefly early poems, or else dramatic works.

poetry that guided all her studies, governed all her thoughts, colored all her conversation. Her nature was at once simple and profound: there was no room in her mind for philosophy, nor in her heart for ambition; the one was filled by imagination, the other engrossed by tenderness. She had a passive temper, but decided tastes; any one might influence, but very few impressed her. Her strength and her weakness alike lay in her affections. These would sometimes make her weep at a word,—at others, imbue her with courage; so that she was alternately a 'falcon-hearted dove,' and 'a reed shaken with the wind.' Her voice was a sad sweet melody, and her spirits reminded me of an old poet's description of the orange tree, with its

'Golden lamps hid in a night of green'

or of those Spanish gardens where the pomegranate grows beside the cypress. Her gladness was like a burst of sunlight; and, if in her depression she resembled night, it was night bearing her stars. I might describe and describe forever, but should never succeed in portraying Egeria. She was a Muse, a Grace, a variable child, a dependent woman, the Italy of human beings."

In Mrs. Hemans's poetry there is (as already observed) a large measure of beauty, and, along with this, very considerable skill. Aptitude and delicacy in versification, and a harmonious balance in the treatment of the subject, are very generally apparent; if we accept the key-note as right we may with little misgiving acquiesce in what follows on to the close. Her skill, however, hardly rises into the loftier region of art: there is a gift, and culture added to the gift, but not a great native faculty working in splendid independence, or yet more splendid self-discipline. Her sources of inspiration being genuine, and the tone of her mind feminine in an intense degree, the product has no lack of sincerity; and yet it leaves a certain artificial impression rather perhaps through a cloying flow of "right-minded" perceptions of moral and material beauty than through any other defect. "Balmy" it may be: but the atmosphere

of her verse is by no means bracing. One might sum up the weak points in Mrs. Hemans's poetry by saying that it is not only "feminine" poetry (which under the circumstances can be no imputation, rather an encomium) but also "female" poetry: besides exhibiting the fineness and charm of womanhood, it has the monotone of mere sex. Mrs. Hemans has that love of good and horror of evil which characterize a scrupulous female mind; and which we may most rightly praise without concluding that they favor poetical robustness, or even perfection in literary form. She is a leader in that very modern phalanx of poets who persistently co-ordinate the impulse of sentiment with the guiding power of morals or religion. Everything must convey its "lesson," and is indeed set forth for the sake of its lesson: but must at the same time have the emotional gush of a spontaneous sentiment. The poet must not write because he has something of his own to say, but because he has something *right* to feel and say. Lamartine was a prophet in this line. After allowing all proper deductions, however, it may be gratefully acknowledged that Mrs. Hemans takes a very honorable rank among poetesses; and that there is in her writings much which both appeals, and deserves to appeal, to many gentle, sweet, pious, and refined souls, in virtue of its thorough possession of the same excellent gifts. According to the spiritual or emotional condition of her readers, it would be found that a poem by this authoress which to one reader would be graceful and tender would to another be touching, and to a third poignantly pathetic. The first we can suppose to be a man, and the third a woman; or the first a critic, the second a "poetical reader," and the third a sensitive nature, attuned to sympathy by suffering.

W. M. ROSSETTI.

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MRS. HEMANS' POETICAL WORKS.

THE FOREST SANCTUARY.

"Ihr Plätze aller meiner stillen freuden,
Euch lass' ich hinter mir auf immerdar!

* * * * * * *

So ist des geistes ruf an mich ergangen,
Mich treibt nicht eitles, irdisches verlangen."
Die Jungfrau von Orleans.

"Long time against oppression have I fought,
And for the native liberty of faith
Have bled and suffered bonds."
Remorse; a Tragedy.

[The following poem is intended to describe the mental conflicts, as well as outward sufferings, of a Spaniard, who, flying from the religious persecutions of his own country, in the sixteenth century, takes refuge, with his child, in a North American forest. The story is supposed to be related by himself, amidst the wilderness which has afforded him an asylum.]

I.

THE voices of my home!—I hear them still!
They have been with me through the dreamy night—
The blessed household voices, wont to fill
My heart's clear depths with unalloyed delight!
I hear them still, unchanged: though some from earth
Are music parted, and the tones of mirth—
Wild, silvery tones, that rang through days more bright—
Have died in others; yet to me they come
Singing of boyhood back—the voices of my home!

II.

They call me through this hush of woods reposing
In the gray stillness of the summer morn;
They wander by when heavy flowers are closing,
And thoughts grow deep, and winds and stars are born
Even as a fount's remembered gushings burst
On the parched traveller in his hour of thirst,
E'en thus they haunt me with sweet sounds, till worn
By quenchless longings, to my soul I say—
Oh! for the dove's swift wings, that I might flee away.

III.

And find mine ark! Yet whither? I must bear
A yearning heart within me to the grave.
I am of those o'er whom a breath of air—
Just darkening in its course the lake's bright wave,
And sighing through the feathery canes—hath power
To call up shadows, in the silent hour,
From the dim past, as from a wizard's cave!
So must it be! These skies above me spread:
Are they my own soft skies?—Ye rest not here, my dead!

IV.

Ye far amidst the southern flowers lie sleeping,
Your graves all smiling in the sunshine clear;
Save one! a blue, lone, distant main is sweeping
High o'er *one* gentle head. Ye rest not here!—
'Tis not the olive, with a whisper swaying,
Not thy low ripplings, glassy water, playing
Through my own chestnut groves which fill mine ear;
But the faint echoes in my breast that dwell,
And for their birthplace moan, as moans the ocean-shell.

V.

Peace!—I will dash these fond regrets to earth,
Even as an eagle shakes the cumbering rain
From his strong pinion. Thou that gav'st me birth
And lineage, and once home,—my native Spain!
My own bright land—my father's land—my child's!
What hath thy son brought from thee to the wilds?
He hath brought marks of torture and the chain—
Traces of things which pass not as a breeze;
A blighted name, dark thoughts, wrath, woe—thy gifts are these!

VI.

A blighted name! I hear the winds of morn—
Their sounds are not of this! I hear the shiver
Of the green reeds, and all the rustlings, borne
From the high forest, when the light leaves quiver:
Their sounds are not of this!—the cedars, waving,
Lend it no tone: His wide savannas laving,
It is not murmured by the joyous river!
What part hath mortal name, where God alone
Speaks to the mighty waste, and through its heart is known.

VII.

Is it not much that I may worship Him
With naught my spirit's breathings to control,
And feel His presence in the vast and dim,
And whispery woods, where dying thunders roll
From the far cataracts? Shall I not rejoice
That I have learned at last to know *His* voice

From man's? I will rejoice!—my soaring soul
Now hath redeemed her birthright of the day,
And won, through clouds, to Him her own unfettered way!

VIII.

And thou, my boy! that silent at my knee
Dost lift to mine thy soft, dark, earnest eyes,
Filled with the love of childhood, which I see
Pure through its depths, a thing without disguise;
Thou that hath breathed in slumber on my breast,
When I have checked its throbs to give thee rest,
Mine own! whose young thoughts fresh before me rise!
Is it not much that I may guide thy prayer,
And circle thy glad soul with free and healthful air?

IX.

Why should I weep on thy bright head, my boy?
Within thy fathers' halls thou wilt not dwell,
Nor lift their banner, with a warrior's joy,
Amidst the sons of mountain chiefs, who fell
For Spain of old. Yet what if rolling waves
Have borne us far from our ancestral graves?
Thou shalt not feel thy bursting heart rebel,
As mine hath done; nor bear what I have borne,
Casting in falsehood's mould the indignant brow of scorn.

X.

This shall not be thy lot, my blessed child!
I have not sorrowed, struggled, lived in vain.
Hear me! magnificent and ancient wild;
And mighty rivers, ye that meet the main,
As deep meets deep; and forests, whose dim shade
The flood's voice, and the wind's, by swells pervade;
Hear me! 'Tis well to die, and not complain;
Yet there are hours when the charged heart must speak
E'en in the desert's ear to pour itself, or break!

XI.

I see an oak before me: it hath been
The crowned one of the woods; and might have flung
Its hundred arms to heaven, still freshly green;
But a wild vine around the stem hath clung,
From branch to branch close wreaths of bondage throwing,
Till the proud tree, before no tempest bowing,
Hath shrunk and died those serpent folds among.
Alas! alas! what is it that I see?
An image of man's mind, land of my sires, with thee!

XII.

Yet art thou lovely! Song is on thy hills.
O sweet and mournful melodies of Spain,

That lulled my boyhood, how your memory thrills
The exile's heart with sudden-wakening pain !
Your sounds are on the rocks :—that I might hear
Once more the music of the mountaineer !
And from the sunny vales the shepherd's strain
Floats out, and fills the solitary place
With the old tuneful names of Spain's heroic race.

XIII.

But there was silence one bright, golden day,
Through my own pine-hung mountains. Clear, yet lone,
In the rich autumn light the vineyards lay,
And from the fields the peasant's voice was gone ;
And the red grapes untrodden strewed the ground ;
And the free flocks, untended, roamed around.
Where was the pastor ?—where the pipe's wild tone ?
Music and mirth were hushed the hills among,
While to the city's gates each hamlet poured its throng.

XIV.

Silence upon the mountains ! But within
The city's gate a rush, a press, a swell
Of multitudes, their torrent-way to win ;
And heavy boomings of a dull deep bell,
A dead pause following each—like that which parts
The dash of billows, holding breathless hearts
Fast in the hush of fear—knell after knell ;
And sounds of thickening steps, like thunder rain
That plashes on the roof of some vast echoing fane !

XV.

What pageant's hour approached ? The sullen gate
Of a strong ancient prison-house was thrown
Back to the day. And who, in mournful state,
Came forth, led slowly o'er its threshold-stone ?
They that had learned, in cells of secret gloom,
How sunshine is forgotten ! They to whom
The very features of mankind were grown
Things that bewildered ! O'er their dazzled sight
They lifted their warm hands, and cowered before the ligh

XVI.

To this, man brings his brother ! Some were there,
Who, with their desolation, had entwined
Fierce strength, and girt the sternness of despair
Fast round their bosoms, even as warriors bind
The breastplate on for fight ; but brow and cheek
Seemed *theirs* a torturing panoply to speak !
And there were some, from whom the very mind
Had been wrung out , they smiled—oh, startling smile,
Whence man's high soul is fled ! Where doth it sleep the while !

XVII.

But onward moved the melancholy train,
For their false creeds in fiery pangs to die.
This was the solemn sacrifice of Spain—
Heaven's offering from the land of chivalry!
Through thousands, thousands of their race they moved—
Oh! how unlike all others!—the beloved,
The free, the proud, the beautiful! whose eye
Grew fixed before them, while a people's breath
Was hushed, and its one soul bound in the thought of death!

XVIII.

It might be that, amidst the countless throng,
There swelled some heart with pity's weight oppressed:
For the wide stream of human love is strong;
And woman, on whose fond and faithful breast
Childhood is reared, and at whose knee the sigh
Of its first prayer is breathed—she, too, was nigh.
But life is dear, and the free footstep blessed,
And home a sunny place, where each may fill
Some eye with glistening smiles,—and therefore all were still.

XIX.

All still,—youth, courage, strength!—a winter laid,
A chain of palsy cast, on might and mind!
Still, as at noon a southern forest's shade,
They stood, those breathless masses of mankind,
Still, as a frozen torrent! But the wave
Soon leaps to foaming freedom; they, the brave,
Endured—they saw the martyr's place assigned
In the red flames—whence is the withering spell
That numbs each human pulse? They saw, and thought it well.

XX.

And I, too, thought it well! That very morn
From a far land I came, yet round we clung
The spirit of my own. No hand had torn
With a strong grasp away the veil which hung
Between mine eyes and truth. I gazed, I saw
Dimly, as through a glass. In silent awe
I watched the fearful rites; and if there sprung
One rebel feeling from its deep founts up,
Shuddering, I flung it back, as guilt's own poison-cup.

XXI.

But I was wakened as the dreamers waken,
Whom the shrill trumpet and the shriek of dread
Rouse up at midnight, when their walls are taken,
And they must battle till their blood is shed
On their own threshold floor. A path for light
Through my torn breast was shattered by the might

Of the swift thunder-stroke ; and freedom's tread
Came in through ruins, late, yet not in vain,
Making the blighted place all green with life again.

XXII.

Still darkly, slowly, as a sullen mass
Of cloud o'ersweeping, without wind, the sky,
Dream-like I saw the sad procession pass,
And marked its victims with a tearless eye.
They moved before me but as pictures, wrought
Each to reveal some secret of man's thought,
On the sharp edge of sad mortality ;
Till in his place came one—oh ! could it be?
My friend, my heart's first friend !—and did I gaze on thee!

XXIII.

On thee ! with whom in boyhood I had played,
At the grape-gatherings, by my native streams ;
And to whose eye my youthful soul had laid
Bare, as to heaven's, its glowing world of dreams ;
And by whose side midst warriors I had stood,
And in whose helm was brought—oh, earned with blood !—
The fresh wave to my lips, when tropic beams
Smote on my fevered brow ! Ay, years had passed,
Severing our paths, brave friend !—and *thus* we met at last !

XXIV.

I see it still—the lofty mien thou borest !
On my pale forehead sat a sense of power—
The very look that once thou brightly worest,
Cheering me onward through a fearful hour,
When we were girt by Indian bow and spear,
Midst the white Andes—even as mountain deer,
Hemmed in our camp ; but through the javelin shower
We rent our way, a tempest of despair !
And thou—hadst thou but died with thy true brethren there!

XXV.

I call the fond wish back—for thou hast perished
More nobly far my Alvar !—making known
The might of truth ; and be thy memory cherished
With theirs, the thousands that around her throne
Have poured their lives out smiling, in that doom
Finding a triumph, if denied a tomb !
Ay, with their ashes hath the wind been sown,
And with the wind their spirit shall be spread,
Filling man's heart and home with records of the dead.

XXVI.

Thou Searcher of the soul ! in whose dread sight
Not the bold guilt alone that mocks the skies,

But the scarce owned unwhispered thought of night,
As a thing written with the sunbeam lies ;
Thou knowest—whose eye through shade and depth can see,
That this man's crime was but to worship thee,
Like those that made their hearts by sacrifice,
The called of yore—wont by the Saviour's side
On the dim Olive Mount to pray at eventide.

XXVII.

For the strong spirit will at times awake,
Piercing the mists that wrap her clay abode ;
And, born of thee, she may not always take
Earth's accents for the oracles of God ;
And even for this—O dust, whose mask is power !
Reed, that wouldst be a scourge thy little hour !
Spark, whereon yet the mighty hath not trod,
And therefore thou destroyest !—where were flown
Our hopes, if man were left to man's decree alone !

XXVIII.

But this I felt not yet. I could but gaze
On him, my friend ; while that swift moment threw
A sudden freshness back on vanished days,
Like water-drops on some dim picture's hue ;
Calling the proud time up, when first I stood
Where banners floated, and my heart's quick blood
Sprang to a torrent as the clarion blew,
And he—his sword was like a brother's worn,
That watches through the field his mother's youngest born.

XXXIX.

But a lance met me in that day's career—
Senseless I lay amidst the o'ersweeping fight ;
Wakening at last, how full, how strangely clear,
That scene on memory flashed !—the shivery light,
Moonlight, on broken shields—the plain of slaughter,
The fountain-side, the low sweet sound of water—
And Alvar bending o'er me—from the night
Covering me with his mantle. All the past
Flowed back ; my soul's far chords all answered to the blast.

XXX.

Till, in that rush of visions, I became
As one that, by the bands of slumber wound,
Lies with a powerless but all-thrilling frame,
Intense in consciousness of sight and sound,
Yet buried in a wildering dream which brings
Loved faces round him, girt with fearful things !
Troubled even thus I stood, but chained and bound
On that familiar form mine eye to keep :
Alas ! I might not fall upon his neck and weep !

XXXI.

He passed me, and what next? I looked on two,
Following his footsteps to the same dread place,
For the same guilt—his sisters! Well I knew
The beauty on those brows, though each young face
Was changed—so deeply changed!—a dungeon's air
Is hard for loved and lovely things to bear.
And ye, O daughters of a lofty race,
Queen-like Theresa! radiant Inez!—flowers
So cherished! were ye then but reared for those dark hours!

XXXII.

A mournful home, young sisters, had ye left!
With your lutes hanging hushed upon the wall,
And silence round the aged man, bereft
Of each glad voice once answering to his call.
Alas, that lonely father! doomed to pine
For sounds departed in his life's decline;
And, midst the shadowing banners of his hall,
With his white hair to sit, and deem the name
A hundred chiefs had borne, cast down by you to shame!

XXXIII.

And woe for you, midst looks and words of love,
And gentle hearts and faces, nursed so long!
How had I seen you in your beauty move,
Wearing the wreath, and listening to the song!—
Yet sat, even then, what seemed the crowd to shun,
Half-veiled upon the pale clear brow of one,
And deeper thoughts than oft to youth belong—
Thoughts, such as wake to evening's whispery sway,
Within the drooping shade of her sweet eyelids lay.

XXXIV.

And if she mingled with the festive train,
It was but as some melancholy star
Beholds the dance of shepherds on the plain,
In its bright stillness present, though afar.
Yet would she smile—and that, too, hath its smile
Circled with joy which reached her not the while,
And bearing a lone spirit, not at war
With earthly things, but o'er their form and hue
Shedding too clear a light, too sorrowfully true.

XXXV.

But the dark hours wring forth the hidden might
Which hath lain bedded in the silent soul,
A treasure all undreamt of,—as the night
Calls out the harmonies of streams that roll
Unheard by day. It seemed as if her breast
Had hoarded energies, till then suppressed

Almost with pain, and bursting from control,
And finding first that hour their pathway free :
Could a rose brave the storm, such might her emblem be !

XXXVI.

For the soft gloom whose shadow still had hung
On her fair brow, beneath its garlands worn,
Was fled ; and fire, like prophecy's, had sprung
Clear to her kindled eye. It might be scorn—
Pride—sense of wrong ; ay, the frail heart is bound
By these at times, even as with adamant round,
Kept so from breaking ! Yet not *thus* upborne
She moved, though some sustaining passion's wave
Lifted her fervent soul—a sister for the brave !

XXXVII.

And yet, alas ! to see the strength which clings
Round woman in such hours ! a mournful sight,
Thought lovely !—an o'erflowing of the springs,
The full springs of affection, deep as bright !
And she, because her life is ever twined
With other lives, and by no stormy wind
May thence be shaken, and because the light
Of tenderness is round her, and her eye
Doth weep such passionate tears—therefore she thus can die.

XXXVIII.

Therefore didst *thou*, through that heart-shaking scene,
As through a triumph move ; and cast aside
Thine own sweet thoughtfulness for victor's mien,
O faithful sister ! cheering thus the guide,
And friend, and brother of thy sainted youth,
Whose hand had led thee to the source of truth,
Where thy glad soul from earth was purified ;
Nor wouldst thou, following him through all the past,
That he should see that step grow tremulous at last.

XXXIX.

For thou hadst made no deeper love a guest
Midst thy young spirit's dreams, than that which grows
Between the nurtured of the same fond breast,
The sheltered of one roof ; and thus it rose
Twined in with life. How is it that the hours
Of the same sport, the gathering early flowers
Round the same tree, the sharing one repose,
And mingling one first prayer in murmurs soft,
From the heart's memory fade in this world's breath so oft

XL.

But thee that breath had touched not ; thee, nor him,
The true in all things found !—and thou wert blest

Even then, that no remembered change could dim
The perfect image of affection pressed
Like armor to thy bosom! Thou hadst kept
Watch by thy brother's couch of pain, and wept,
Thy sweet face covering with thy robe, when rest
Fled from the sufferer; thou hadst bound his faith
Unto thy soul; one light, one hope ye chose—one death.

XLI.

So didst thou pass on brightly!—but for her,
Next in that path, how may *her* doom be spoken!
All Merciful! to think that such things were,
And *are*, and seen by men with hearts unbroken!
To think of that fair girl, whose path had been
So strewed with rose-leaves, all one fairy scene!
And whose quick glance came ever as a token
Of hope to drooping thought, and her glad voice
As a free bird's in spring, that makes the woods rejoice!

XLII.

And she to die!—she loved the laughing earth
With such deep joy in its fresh leaves and flowers!
Was not her smile even as the sudden birth
Of a young rainbow, coloring vernal showers?
Yes! but to meet her fawn-like step, to hear
The gushes of wild song, so silvery clear
Which oft, unconsciously, in happier hours
Flowed from her lips, was to forget the sway
Of Time and Death below, blight, shadow, dull decay!

XLIII.

Could this change be? The hour, the scene, where last
I saw that form, came floating o'er my mind:
A golden vintage-eve; the heats were passed,
And, in the freshness of the fanning wind,
Her father sat where gleamed the first faint star
Through the lime-boughs; and with her light guitar,
She, on the greensward at his feet reclined,
In his calm face laughed up; some shepherd lay
Singing, as childhood sings on the lone hills at play.

XLIV.

And now—oh, God—the bitter fear of death,
The sore amaze, the faint o'ershadowing dread,
Had grasped her!—panting in her quick drawn breath,
And in her white lips quivering. Onward led,
She looked up with her dim bewildered eyes,
And there smiled out her own soft brilliant skies,
Far in their sultry southern azure spread,
Glowing with joy, but silent!—still they smiled,
Yet sent down no reprieve for earth's poor trembling child.

XLV.

Alas! that earth had all too strong a hold,
Too fast, sweet Inez! on thy heart, whose bloom
Was given to early love, nor knew how cold
The hours which follow. There was one, with whom
Young as thou wert, and gentle, and untried,
Thou mightst, perchance, unshrinkingly have died:
But he was far away; and with thy doom
Thus gathering, life grew so intensely dear,
That all thy slight frame shook with its cold mortal fear!

XLVI.

No aid?—thou too didst pass!—and all had passed,
The fearful—and the desperate—and the strong!
Some like the bark that rushes with the blast,
Some like the leaf swept shivering along;
And some as men, that have but one more field
To fight, and then may slumber on their shield,—
Therefore they arm in hope. But now the throng
Rolled on, and bore me with their living tide,
Even as a bark wherein is left no power to guide.

XLVII.

Wave swept on wave. We reached a stately square,
Decked for the rites. An altar stood on high,
And gorgeous in the midst: a place for prayer,
And praise, and offering. Could the earth supply
No fruits, no flowers for sacrifice, of all
Which on her sunny lap unheeded fall?
No fair young firstling of the flock to die,
As when before their God the patriarchs stood?
Look down! man brings thee, heaven! his brother's guiltless blood.

XLVIII.

Hear its voice, hear!—a cry goes up to thee,
From the stained sod; make thou thy judgment known
On him the shedder!—let his portion be
The fear that walks at midnight—give the moan
In the wind haunting him, a power to say,
"Where is thy brother?"—and the stars a ray
To search and shake his spirit, when alone,
With the dread splendor of their burning eyes!
So shall earth own thy will—Mercy, not sacrifice!

XLIX.

Sounds of triumphant praise! the mass was sung—
Voices that die not might have poured such strains!
Through Salem's towers might that proud chant have rung
When the Most High, on Syria's palmy plains,
Had quelled her foes!—so full it swept, a sea
Of loud waves jubilant, and rolling free!

—Oft when the wind, as through resounding fanes,
Hath filled the choral forests with its power,
Some deep tone brings me back the music of that hour.

L.

It died away ;—the incense-cloud was driven
Before the breeze—the words of doom were said,
And the sun faded mournfully from heaven :
He faded mournfully and dimly red,
Parting in clouds from those that looked their last,
And sighed—"Farewell, thou sun!" Eve glowed and passed
Night—midnight and the moon—came forth and shed
Sleep, even as dew, on glen, wood, peopled spot—
Save one—a place of death—and there men slumbered not.

LI.

'Twas not within the city—but in sight
Of the snow-crowned sierras, freely sweeping,
With many an eagle's eyrie on the height,
And hunter's cabin, by the torrent peeping
Far off : and vales between, and vineyards lay,
With sound and gleam of waters on their way,
And chestnut woods, that girt the happy sleeping
In many a pleasant home !—the midnight sky
Brought softly that rich world round those who came to die.

LII.

The darkly glorious midnight sky of Spain,
Burning with stars ! What had the torches' glare
To do beneath that temple, and profane
Its holy radiance ? By their wavering flare,
I saw beside the pyres—I see thee *now*,
O bright Theresa ! with thy lifted brow,
And thy clasped hands, and dark eyes filled with prayer !
And thee, sad Inez ! bowing thy fair head,
And mantling up thy face, all colorless with dread !

LIII.

And Alvar, Alvar !—I behold thee too,
Pale, steadfast, kingly : till thy clear glance fell
On that young sister ; then perturbed it grew,
And all thy laboring bosom seemed to swell
With painful tenderness. Why came I there,
That troubled image of my friend to bear
Thence, for my after years ?—a thing to dwell
In my heart's core, and on the darkness rise,
Disquieting my dreams with its bright mournful eyes ?

LIV.

Why came I ?—oh ! the heart's deep mystery ! Why
In man's last hour doth vain affection's gaze

Fix itself down on struggling agony,
To the dimmed eyeballs freezing as they glaze?
It might be—yet the power to will seemed o'er—
That thy soul yearned to hear his voice once more!
But mine was fettered !—mute in strong amaze,
I watched his features as the night-wind blew,
And torch-light or the moon's passed o'er their marble hue.

LV.

The trampling of a steed! A tall white steed,
Rending his fiery way the crowds among—
A storm's way through a forest—came at speed,
And a wild voice cried "Inez!" Swift she flung
The mantle from her face, and gazed around,
With a faint shriek at that familiar sound;
And from his seat a breathless rider sprung
And dashed off fiercely those who came to part,
And rushed to that pale girl, and clasped her to his heart.

LVI.

And for a moment all around gave way
To that full burst of passion! On his breast,
Like a bird panting yet from fear, she lay,
But blest—in misery's very lap—yet blest!
Oh love, love, strong as death !—from such an hour
Pressing out joy by thine immortal power;
Holy and fervent love! had earth but rest
For thee and thine, this world were all too fair!
How could we thence be weaned to die without despair!

LVII.

But she—as falls a willow from the storm,
O'er its own river streaming—thus reclined
On the youth's bosom hung her fragile form,
And clasping arms, so passionately twined
Around his neck—with such a trusting fold,
A full deep sense of safety in their hold,
As if naught earthly might the embrace unbind!
Alas! a child's fond faith, believing still
Its mother's breast beyond the lightning's reach to kill!

LVIII.

Brief rest! upon the turning billow's height
A strange sweet moment of some heavenly strain,
Floating between the savage gusts of night,
That sweep the seas to foam! Soon dark again
The hour—the scene; the intensely present rushed
Back on her spirit, and her large tears gushed
Like blood-drops from a victim—with swift rain
Bathing the bosom where she leaned that hour,
As if her life would melt into the o'erswelling shower.

LIX.

But he whose arm sustained her !—oh, I know
'Twas vain !—and yet he hoped—he fondly strove
Back from her faith her sinking soul to woo,
As life might yet be hers! A dream of love
Which could not look upon so fair a thing,
Remembering how like hope, like joy, like spring,
Her smile was wont to glance, her step to move,
And deem that men indeed, in very truth,
Could mean the sting of death for her soft flowering youth !

LX.

He wooed her back to life. "Sweet Inez, live !
My blessed Inez !—visions have beguiled
Thy heart ; adjure them ! thou wert formed to give
And to find joy ; and hath not sunshine smiled
Around thee ever ? Leave me not, mine own !
Or earth will grow too dark !—for thee alone,
Thee have I loved, thou gentlest ! from a child,
And borne thine image with me o'er the sea,
Thy soft voice in my soul. Speak ! O ! yet live for me.

LXI.

She looked up wildly ; there were anxious eyes
Waiting that look—sad eyes of troubled thought,
Alvar's—Theresa's ! Did her childhood rise,
With all its pure and home-affections fraught,
In the brief glance ! She clasped her hands—the strife
Of love, faith, fear, and that vain dream of life,
Within her woman's breast so deeply wrought,
It seemed as if a reed so slight and weak
Must, in the rending storm not quiver only—break !

LXII.

And thus it was. The young cheek flushed and faded,
As the swift blood in currents came and went,
And hues of death the marble brow o'ershaded,
And the sunk eye a watery lustre sent
Through its white fluttering lids. Then tremblings passed
O'er the frail form, that shook it as the blast
Shakes the sere leaf, until the spirit rent
Its way to peace—the fearful way unknown.
Pale in love's arms she lay—*she !*—what had loved was gone !

LXIII.

Joy for thee, trembler !—thou redeemed one, joy !
Young dove set free !—earth, ashes, soulless clay,
Remained for baffled vengeance to destroy.
Thy chain was riven ! Nor hadst thou cast away
Thy hope in thy last hour !—though love was there
Striving to wring thy troubled soul from prayer,
And life seemed robed in beautiful array,

Too fair to leave !—but this might be forgiven,
Thou wert so richly crowned with precious gifts of heaven,

LXIV.

But woe for him who felt the heart grow still,
Which, with its weight of agony, had lain
Breaking on his ! Scarce could the mortal chill
Of the hushed bosom, ne'er to heave again,
And all the silence curdling round the eye,
Bring home the stern belief that she could die—
That she indeed could die !—for, wild and vain
As hope might be, his soul *had* hoped : 'twas o'er—
Slowly his failing arms dropped from the form they bore.

LXV.

They forced him from the spot. It might be well,
That the fierce reckless words by anguish wrung
From his torn breast, all aimless as they fell,
Like spray-drops from the strife of torrents flung,
Were marked as guilt. There are who note these things
Against the smitten heart ; its breaking strings
—On whose low thrills once gentle music hung—
With a rude hand of touch unholy trying,
And numbering them as crimes, the deep, strange tones replying.

LXVI.

But ye in solemn joy, O faithful pair !
Stood gazing on your parted sister's dust ;
I saw your features by the torch's glare,
And they were brightening with a heavenward trust !
I saw the doubt, the anguish, the dismay,
Melt from my Alvar's glorious mien away ;
And peace was there—the calmness of the just !
And, bending down the slumberer's brow to kiss,
"Thy rest is won," he said, "sweet sister ! Praise for this !"

LXVII.

I started as from sleep ;—yes !—he had spoken—
A breeze had troubled memory's hidden source !
At once the torpor of my soul was broken—
Thought, feeling, passion, woke in tenfold force
There are soft breathings in the southern wind,
That so your ice-chains, O ye streams ! unbind,
And free the foaming swiftness of your course !
I burst from those that held me back, and fell
Even on his neck, and cried—"Friend ! brother ! fare thee well !"

LXVIII.

Did *he* not say "Farewell ?" Alas ! no breath
Came to mine ear. Hoarse murmurs from the throng
Told that the mysteries in the face of death

Had from their eager sight been veiled too long.
And we were parted as the surge might part
Those that would die together, true of heart.
His hour was come—but in mine anguish strong,
Like a fierce swimmer through the midnight sea,
Blindly I rushed away from that which was to be.

LXIX.

Away—away I rushed ; but swift and high
The arrowy pillars of the firelight grew,
Till the transparent darkness of the sky
Flushed to a blood-red mantle in their hue ;
And, phantom-like, the kindling city seemed
To spread, float, wave, as on the wind they streamed,
With their wild splendor chasing me ! I knew
The death-work was begun—I veiled mine eyes,
Yet stopped in spellbound fear to catch the victims' cries.

LXX.

What heard I then ?—a ringing shriek of pain,
Such as forever haunts the tortured ear ?
I heard a sweet and solemn-breathing strain
Piercing the flame, untremulous and clear !
The rich, triumphal tones !—I knew them well,
As they came floating with a breezy swell !
Man's voice was there—a clarion-voice to cheer
In the mid-battle—ay, to turn the flying ;
Woman's—that might have sung of heaven beside the dying !

LXXI.

It was a fearful, yet a glorious thing
To hear that hymn of Martyrdom, and know
That its glad stream of melody could spring
Up from the unsounded gulfs of human woe !
Alvar ! Theresa !—what is deep ? what strong ?
—God's breath within the soul ! It filled that song
From your victorious voices ! But the glow
On the hot air and lurid skies increased :
Faint grew the sounds—more faint : I listened—they had ceased !

LXXII.

And thou indeed hadst perished, my soul's friend !
I might from other ties—but thou alone
Couldst with a glance the veil of dimness rend,
By other years o'er boyhood's memory thrown !
Others might aid me onward : thou and I
Had mingled the fresh thoughts that early die,
Once flowering—never more ! And thou wert gone !
Who could give back my youth, my spirit free,
Or be in aught again what thou hadst been to me ?

LXXIII.

And yet I wept thee not, thou true and brave !
I could not weep—there gathered round thy name
Too deep a passion. *Thou* denied a grave !
Thou, with the blight flung on thy soldier's fame !
Had I not known thy heart from childhood's time ?
Thy heart of hearts ?—and couldst thou die for crime ?
No ! had all earth decreed that death of shame,
I would have set, against all earth's decree,
The inalienable trust of my firm soul in thee !

LXXIV.

There are swift hours in life—strong, rushing hours,
That do the work of tempests in their might !
They shake down things that stood as rocks and towers
Unto the undoubting mind ; they pour in light
Where it but startles—like a burst of day
For which the uprooting of an oak makes way ;
They sweep the coloring mists from off our sight ;
They touch with fire thought's graven page, the roll
Stamped with past years—and lo ! it shrivels as a scroll !

LXXV.

And this was of such hours ! The sudden flow
Of my soul's tide seemed whelming me ; the glare
Of the red flames, yet rocking to and fro,
Scorched up my heart with breathless thirst for air,
And solitude, and freedom. It had been
Well with me then, in some vast desert scene,
To pour my voice out, for the winds to bear
On with them, wildly questioning the sky,
Fiercely the untroubled stars, of man's dim destiny.

LXXVI.

I would have called, adjuring the dark cloud ;
To the most ancient heavens I would have said—
"Speak to me ! show me truth !"—through night aloud
I would have cried to him, the newly dead,
"Come back ! and show me truth !" My spirit seemed
Gasping for some free burst, its darkness teemed
With such pent storms of thought ! Again I fled.
I fled, a refuge from man's face to gain,
Scarce conscious when I paused, entering a lonely fane.

LXXVII.

A mighty minster, dim, and proud, and vast !
Silence was round the sleepers whom its floor
Shut in the grave ; a shadow of the past,
A memory of the sainted steps that wore
Erewhile its gorgeous pavement, seemed to brood
Like mist upon the stately solitude ;

A halo of sad fame to mantle o'er
Its white sepulchral forms of mail-clad men ;
And all was hushed as night in some deep Alpine glen.

LXXVIII.

More hushed, far more !—for there the wind sweeps by
Or the woods tremble to the stream's loud play ;
Here a strange echo made my very sigh
Seem for the place too much a sound of day !
Too much my footsteps broke the moonlight, fading,
Yet arch through arch in one soft flow pervading,
And I stood still : prayer, chant had died away ;
Yet past me floated a funereal breath
Of incense. I stood still—as before God and death.

LXXIX.

For thick ye girt me round, ye long departed !
Dust—imaged forms—with cross, and shield, and crest ;
It seemed as if your ashes would have started
Had a wild voice burst forth above your rest !
Yet ne'er, perchance, did worshipper of yore
Bear to your thrilling presence what *I* bore
Of wrath, doubt, anguish, battle in the breast !
I could have poured out words, on that pale air,
To make your proud tombs ring. No, no ! I could not *there!*

LXXX.

Not midst those aisles, through which a thousand years.
Mutely as clouds, and reverently, had swept ;
Not by those shrines, which yet the trace of tears
And kneeling votaries on their marble kept !
Ye were too mighty in your pomp of gloom
And trophied age, O temple, altar, tomb !
And you, ye dead !—for in that faith ye slept,
Whose weight had grown a mountain's on my heart,
Which could not *there* be loosed. I turned me to depart.

LXXXI.

I turned : what glimmered faintly on my sight—
Faintly, yet brightening as a wreath of snow
Seen through dissolving haze ? The moon, the night,
Had waned, and dawn poured in—gray, shadowy, slow.
Yet dayspring still ! A solemn hue it caught,
Piercing the storied windows, darkly fraught
With stoles and draperies of imperial glow ;
And, soft and sad, that coloring gleam was thrown
Where, pale, a pictured form above the altar shone.

LXXXII.

Thy form, thou Son of God !—a wrathful deep,
With foam, and cloud, and tempest round Thee spread,

And such a weight of night !—a night, when sleep
From the fierce rocking of the billows fled.
A bark showed dim beyond Thee, its mast
Bowed, and its rent sail shivering to the blast ;
But, like a spirit in thy gliding tread,
Thou, as o'er glass, didst walk that stormy sea
Through rushing winds, which left a silent path for Thee.

LXXXIII.

So still thy white robes fell !—no breath of air
Within their long and slumberous folds had sway.
So still the waves of parted, shadowy hair
From the clear brow flowed droopingly away !
Dark were the heavens above thee, Saviour !—dark
The gulfs, Deliverer ! round the straining bark !
But Thou !—o'er all thine aspect and array
Was poured one stream of pale, broad, silvery light.
Thou wert the single star of that all-shrouding night !

LXXXIV.

Aid for one sinking ! Thy lone brightness gleamed
On his wild face, just lifted o'er the wave,
With its worn, fearful, *human* look that seemed
To cry, through surge and blast—" I perish—save !"
Not to the winds—not vainly ! Thou wert nigh,
Thy hand was stretched to fainting agony,
Even in the portals of the unquiet grave !
O Thou that art the life ! and yet didst bear
Too much of mortal woe to turn from mortal prayer !

LXXXV.

But was it not a thing to rise on death,
With its remembered light, that face of thine,
Redeemer ! dimmed by this world's misty breath,
Yet mournfully, mysteriously divine ?
O ! that calm, sorrowful, prophetic eye,
With its dark depths of grief, love, majesty !
And the pale glory of the brow !—a shrine
Where power sat veiled, yet shedding softly round
What told that *Thou* couldst be but for a time uncrowned !

LXXXVI.

And, more than all, the heaven of that sad smile !
The lip of mercy, our immortal trust !
Did not that look, that very look, erewhile
Pour its o'ershadowed beauty on the dust ?
Wert thou not such when earth's dark cloud hung o'er Thee ?
Surely thou wert ! my heart grew hushed before Thee,
Sinking with all its passions, as the gust
Sank at thy voice, along the billowy way :
What had I there to do but kneel, and weep, and pray ?

LXXXVII.

Amidst the stillness rose my spirit's cry,
Amidst the dead—"By that full cup of woe,
Pressed from the fruitage of mortality,
Saviour! for Thee—give light! that I may know
If by *thy* will, in thine all-healing name,
Men cast down human hearts to blighting shame,
And early death; and say, if this be so,
Where, then, is mercy? Whither shall we flee,
So unallied to hope, save by our hold on Thee?

LXXXVIII.

"But didst Thou not, the deep sea brightly treading,
Lift from despair that struggler with the wave?
And wert Thou not, sad tears, yet awful, shedding,
Beheld a weeper at a mortal's grave?
And in this weight of anguish, which they bind
On life—this searing to the quick of mind,
That but to God its own free path would crave—
This crushing out of hope, and love, and youth,
Thy will, indeed? Give light! that I may know the truth.

LXXXIX.

"For my sick soul is darkened unto death,
With shadows from the suffering it hath seen;
The strong foundations of mine ancient faith
Sink from beneath me—whereon shall I lean?
Oh! if from thy pure lips was wrung the sigh
Of the dust's anguish? if like man to die—
And earth round *him* shuts heavily—hath been
Even to *Thee* bitter, aid me! guide me! turn
My wild and wandering thoughts back from their starless bourne!"

XC.

And calmed I rose: but how the while had risen
Morn's orient sun, dissolving mist and shade!
Could there indeed be wrong, or chain, or prison,
In the bright world such radiance might pervade?
It filled the fane, it mantled the pale form
Which rose before me through the pictured storm,
Even the gray tombs it kindled, and arrayed
With life!—How hard to see thy race begun
And think man wakes to grief, wakening to *thee*, O Sun!

XCI.

I sought my home again; and thou, my child,
There at thy play beneath yon ancient pine,
With eyes, whose lightning laughter hath beguiled
A thousand pangs, thence flashing joy to mine;
Thou in thy mother's arms, a babe, didst meet
My coming with young smiles, which yet, though sweet,

Seemed on my soul all mournfully to shine,
And ask a happier heritage for thee,
Than but in turn the blight of human hope to see.

XCII.

Now sport, for thou art free ! the bright birds chasing,
Whose wings waft star-like gleams from tree to tree ;
Or with the fawn, thy swift wood-playmate, racing,
Sport on, my joyous child ! for thou art free !
Yes, on that day I took thee to my heart,
And inly vowed for thee a better part
To choose ; that so thy sunny bursts of glee
Should wake no more dim thoughts of far-seen woe,
But, gladdening fearless eyes, flow on—as now they flow.

XCIII.

Thou hast a rich world round thee—mighty shades
Weaving their gorgeous tracery o'er thy head,
With the light melting through their high arcades,
As through a pillared cloister's ; but the dead
Sleep not beneath ; nor doth the sunbeam pass
To marble shrines through rainbow-tinted glass ;
Yet thou, by fount and forest-murmur led
To worship, thou art blest ! to thee is shown
Earth in her holy pomp, decked for her God alone.

PART SECOND.

"Wie diese treue liebe seele
Von ihrem Glauben Voll,
Der ganz allein
Ihr selig machend ist, sich heilig quäle,
Das sie den liebsten Mann verloren halten soll."
FAUST.

"I never shall smile more—but all my days
Walk with still footsteps and with humble eyes,
An everlasting hymn within my soul."
WILSON.

I.

BRING me the sounding of the torrent-water,
With yet a nearer swell ! Fresh breeze, awake !
And river, darkening ne'er with hues of slaughter
Thy wave's pure silver green,—and shining lake,
Spread far before my cabin, with thy zone
Of ancient woods, ye chainless things and lone !
Send voices through the forest aisles, and make
Glad music round me, that my soul may dare,
Cheered by such tones, to look back on a dungeon's air !

II.

O Indian hunter of the desert's race !
That with the spear at times, or bended bow,

Dost cross my footsteps in thy fiery chase
Of the swift elk or blue hill's flying roe ;
Thou that beside the red night-fire thou heapest,
Beneath the cedars and the star-light sleepest,
Thou know'st not, wanderer—never may'st thou know !—
Of the dark holds wherewith man cumbers earth,
To shut from human eyes the dancing seasons' mirth.

III.

There, fettered down from day, to think the while
How bright in heaven the festal sun is glowing,
Making earth's loneliest places, with his smile
Flush like the rose ; and how the streams are flowing
With sudden sparkles through the shadowy grass,
And water-flowers, all trembling as they pass ;
And how the rich, dark summer trees are bowing
With their full foliage : this to know, and pine,
Bound unto midnight's heart, seems a stern lot—'twas mine !

IV.

Wherefore was this ? Because my soul had drawn
Light from the Book whose words are graved in light ·
There, at its well-head, had I found the dawn,
And day, and noon of freedom : but too bright
It shines on that which man to man hath given,
And called the truth—the very truth, from heaven ;
And therefore seeks he in his brother's sight
To cast the mote ; and therefore strives to bind,
With his strong chains, to earth what is not earth's—the mind.

V.

It is a weary and a bitter task
Back from the lip the burning word to keep,
And to shut out heaven's air with falsehood's mask,
And in the dark urn of the soul to heap
Indignant feelings—making e'en of thought
A buried treasure, which may but be sought
When shadows are abroad—and night—and sleep.
I might not brook it long—and thus was thrown
Into that grave-like cell, to wither there alone.

VI.

And I, a child of danger, whose delights
Were on dark hills and many-sounding seas—
I, that amidst the Cordillera heights
Had given Castilian banners to the breeze,
And the full circle of the rainbow seen
There, on the snows ; and in my country been
A mountain wanderer, from the Pyrenees
To the Morena crags—how left I not
Life, or the soul's life, quenched on that sepulchral spot ?

VII.

Because *Thou* didst not leave me, O my God !
Thou wert with those that bore the truth of old
Into the deserts from the oppressor's rod,
And made the caverns of the rock their fold ;
And in the hidden chamber of the dead,
Our guiding lamp with fire immortal fed ;
And met when stars met, by their beams to hold
The free heart's communing with Thee,—and Thou
Wert in the midst, felt, owned—the Strengthener then as now !

VIII.

Yet once I sank. Alas ! man's wavering mind ?
Wherefore and whence the gusts that o'er it blow ?
How they bear with them, floating uncombined,
The shadows of the past, that come and go,
As o'er the deep the old long-buried things
Which a storm's working to the surface brings !
Is the reed shaken,—and must *we* be so,
With every wind ? So, Father ! must we be,
Till we can fix undimmed our steadfast eyes on Thee.

IX

Once my soul died within me. What had thrown
That sickness o'er it ? Even a passing thought
Of a clear spring, whose side, with flowers o'ergrown,
Fondly and oft my boyish steps had sought !
Perchance the damp roof's water-drops that fell
Just then, low tinkling through my vaulted cell,
Intensely heard amidst the stillness, caught
Some tone from memory, of the music, welling
Ever with that fresh rill, from its deep rocky dwelling.

X.

But so my spirit's fevered longings wrought,
Wakening, it might be, to the faint, sad sound,
That from the darkness of the walls they brought
A loved scene round me, visibly around.
Yes ! kindling, spreading, brightening, hue by hue,
Like stars from midnight, through the gloom, it grew,
That haunt of youth, hope, manhood !—till the bound
Of my shut cavern seemed dissolved, and I
Girt by the solemn hills and burning pomp of sky.

XI.

I looked—and lo ! the clear, broad river flowing
Past the old Moorish ruin on the steep,
The lone tower dark against a heaven all glowing,
Like seas of glass and fire—I saw the sweep
Of glorious woods far down the mountain side,
And their still shadows in the gleaming tide,
And the red evening on its waves asleep ;

And midst the scene—oh! more than all—there smiled
My child's fair face, and hers, the mother of my child!

XII

With their soft eyes of love and gladness raised
Up to the flushing sky, as when we stood
Last by that river, and in silence gazed
On the rich world of sunset. But a flood
Of sudden tenderness my soul oppressed;
And I rushed forward, with a yearning breast,
To clasp—alas!—a vision! Wave and wood,
And gentle faces, lifted in the light
Of day's last hectic blush, all melted from my sight.

XIII.

Then darkness!—oh! the unutterable gloom
That seemed as narrowing round me, making less
And less my dungeon, when, with all its bloom,
That bright dream vanished from my loneliness!
It floated off, the beautiful! yet left
Such deep thirst in my soul, that thus bereft,
I lay down, sick with passion's vain excess,
And prayed to die. How oft would sorrow weep
Her weariness to death, if he might come like sleep!

XIV.

But I was roused—and how? It is no tale,
Even midst *thy* shades, thou wilderness! to tell.
I would not have my boy's young cheek made pale,
Nor haunt his sunny rest with what befell
In that drear prison-house. His eye must grow
More dark with thought, more earnest his fair brow,
More high his heart in youthful strength must swell
So shall it fitly burn when all is told:
Let childhood's radiant mist the free child yet enfold.

XV.

It is enough that through such heavy hours
As wring us by our fellowship of clay,
I lived, and undegraded. We have powers
To snatch the oppressor's bitter joy away!
Shall the wild Indian for his savage fame
Laugh and expire, and shall not Truth's high name
Bear up her martyrs with all-conquering sway?
It is enough that torture may be vain:
I had seen Alvar die—the strife was won from Pain.

XVI.

And faint not, heart of man! Though years wane slow
There have been those that from the deepest caves,

And cells of night, and fastnesses below
The stormy dashing of the ocean waves,
Down, farther down than gold lies hid, have nursed
A quenchless hope, and watched their time, and burst
On the bright day, like wakeners from the graves!
I was of such at last!—unchained I trode
This green earth, taking back my freedom from my God!

XVII.

That was an hour to send its fadeless trace
Down life's far-sweeping tide! A dim, wild night,
Like sorrow, hung upon the soft moon's face,
Yet how my heart leaped in her blessed light!
The shepherd's light—the sailor's on the sea—
The hunter's homeward from the mountains free,
Where its lone smile makes tremulously bright
The thousand streams!—I could but gaze through tears
Oh! what a sight is heaven, thus first beheld for years!

XVIII.

The rolling clouds!—they have the whole blue space
Above to sail in—all the dome of sky!
My soul shot with them in their breezy race
O'er star and gloom; but I had yet to fly,
As flies the hunted wolf. A secret spot
And strange, I knew—the sunbeam knew it not,—
Wildest of all the savage glens that lie
In far sierras, hiding their deep springs,
And traversed but by storms, or sounding eagles' wings.

XIX.

Ay, and I met the storm there! I had gained
The covert's heart with swift and stealthy tread:
A moan went past me, and the dark trees rained
Their autumn foliage rustling on my head;
A moan—a hollow gust—and there I stood
Girt with majestic night, and ancient wood,
And foaming water.—Thither might have fled
The mountain Christian with his faith of yore,
When Afric's tambour shook the ringing western shore!

XX.

But through the black ravine the storm came swelling:
—Mighty thou art amidst the hills, thou blast!
In thy lone course the kingly cedars felling,
Like plumes upon the path of battle cast!
A rent oak thundere down beside my cave,
Booming it rushed, as booms a deep sea wave:
A falcon soared; a startled wild-deer passed;
A far-off bell tolled faintly through the roar.
How my glad spirit swept forth with the winds once more!

XXI.

And with the arrowy lightnings !—for they flashed,
Smiting the branches in their fitful play,
And brightly shivering where the torrents dashed
Up, even to crag and eagle's nest, their spray !
And there to stand amidst the pealing strife,
The strong pines groaning with tempestuous life,
And all the mountain-voices on their way,—
Was it not joy ? 'Twas joy in rushing might,
After those years that wove but one long dead of night !

XXII.

There came a softer hour, a lovelier moon,
And lit me to my home of youth again,
Through the dim chestnut shade, where oft at noon,
By the fount's flashing burst, my head had lain
In gentle sleep. But now I passed as one
That may not pause where wood-streams whispering run
Or light sprays tremble to a bird's wild strain ;
Because the avenger's voice is in the wind,
The foe's quick, rustling step close on the leaves behind.

XXIII.

My home of youth ! Oh ! if indeed to part
With the soul's loved ones be a mournful thing,
When we go forth in buoyancy of heart,
And bearing all the glories of our spring
For life to breathe on,—is it less to meet,
When these are faded ?—who shall call it sweet !
Even though love's mingling tears may haply bring
Balm as they fall, too well their heavy showers
Teach us how much is lost of all that once was ours.

XXIV.

Not by the sunshine, with its golden glow,
Nor the green earth, nor yet the laughing sky,
Nor the fair flower-scents, as they come and go
In the soft air, like music wandering by ;
—Oh ! not by these, the unfailing, are we taught
How time and sorrow on our frames have wrought ;
But by the saddened eye, the darkened brow
Of kindred aspects, and the long dim gaze,
Which tell us *we* are changed—how changed from other days

XXV.

Before my father, in my place of birth,
I stood an alien. On the very floor
Which oft had trembled to my boyish mirth,
The love that reared me, knew my face no more !
There hung the antique armor, helm and crest,
Whose every stain woke childhood in my breast ;
There drooped the banner, with the marks it bore

Of Paynim spears ; and I, the worn in frame
And heart, what there was I !—another and the same !

XXVI.

Then bounded in a boy, with clear, dark eye—
How should *he* know his father ? When we parted,
From the soft cloud which mantles infancy,
His soul, just wakening into wonder, darted
Its first looks round. Him followed one, the bride,
Of my young days, the wife how loved and tried !
Her glance met mine—I could not speak—she started
With a bewildered gaze—until there came
Tears to my burning eyes, and from my lips her name.

XXVII.

She knew me then ! I murmured "*Leonor !*"
And her heart answered ! Oh ! the voice is known
First from all else, and swiftest to restore
Love's buried images, with one low tone
That strikes like lightning, when the cheek is faded,
And the brow heavily with thought o'ershaded,
And all the brightness from the aspect gone !
—Upon my breast she sunk, when doubt was fled,
Weeping as those may weep, that meet in woe and dread.

XXVIII.

For there we might not rest. Alas ! to leave
Those native towers, and know that they must fall
By slow decay, and none remain to grieve
When the weeds clustered on the lonely wall !
We were the last—my boy and I—the last
Of a long line which brightly thence had passed !
My father blessed me as I left his hall—
With his deep tones and sweet, though full of years,
He blessed me there, and bathed my child's young head with tears.

XXIX.

I had brought sorrow on his gray hairs down,
And cast the darkness of my branded name
(For so *he* deemed it) on the clear renown,
My own ancestral heritage of fame.
And yet he blessed me ! Father ! if the dust
Lie on those lips benign, my spirit's trust,
Is to behold thee yet, where grief and shame
Dim the bright day no more , and thou will know
That not through guilt thy son thus bowed thine age with woe !

XXX.

And thou, my Leonor ! that unrepining,
If sad in soul, didst quit all else for me,
When stars, the stars that earliest rise, are shining,

How their soft glance unseals each thought of thee !
For on our flight they smiled ; their dewy rays,
Through the last olives, lit thy tearful gaze
Back to the home we never more might see.
So passed we on, like earth's first exiles, turning
Fond looks where hung the sword above their Eden burning.

XXXI.

It was a woe to say, " Farewell, my Spain !
The sunny and the vintage land, farewell !"
—I could have died upon the battle-plain
For thee, my country ! but I might not dwell
In thy sweet vales, at peace. The voice of song
Breathes, with the myrtle scent, thy hills along :
The citron's glow is caught from shade and dell :
But what are these ? upon thy flowery sod
I might not kneel, and pour my free thoughts out to God !

XXXII.

O'er the blue deep I fled, the chainless deep !
Strange heart of man ! that e'en midst woe swells high,
When through the foam he sees his proud bark sweep,
Flinging out joyous gleams to wave and sky!
Yes! it swells high, whate'er he leaves behind,
His spirit rises with the rising wind ;
For, wedded to the far futurity,
On, on, it bears him ever, and the main
Seems rushing, like his hope, some happier shore to gain.

XXXIII.

Not thus is woman. Closely *her* still heart
Doth twine itself with e'en each lifeless thing
Which, long remembered, seemed to bear its part
In her calm joys. Forever would she cling,
A brooding dove, to that sole spot of earth
Where she hath loved, and given her children birth,
And heard their first sweet voices. There may Spring
Array no path, renew no flower, no leaf,
But hath its breath of home, its claim to farewell grief.

XXXIV.

I looked on Leonor,—and if there seemed
A cloud of more than pensiveness to rise
In the faint smiles that o'er her features gleamed,
And the soft darkness of her serious eyes,
Misty with tender gloom, I called it nought,
But the fond exile's pang, a lingering thought
Of her own vale, with all its melodies
And living light of streams. Her soul would rest
Beneath your shades, I said, bowers of the gorgeous West !

XXXV.

Oh, could we live in visions ! could we hold
Delusion faster, longer, to our breast,
When it shuts from us, with its mantle's fold,
That which we see not, and are therefore blest !
But they, our loved and loving—they to whom
We have spread out our souls in joy and gloom,
Their looks and accents unto ours addressed,
Have been a language of familiar tone
Too long to breathe, at last, dark sayings and unknown.

XXXVI.

I told my heart, 'twas but the exile's woe
Which pressed on that sweet bosom ; I deceived
My heart but half ; a whisper, faint and low,
Haunting it ever, and at times believed,
Spoke of some deeper cause. How oft we seem
Like those that dream, and *know* the while they dream—
Midst the soft falls of airy voices grieved
And troubled, while bright—phantoms round them play,
By a dim sense that all will float and fade away !

XXXVII.

Yet, as if chasing joy, I wooed the breeze
To speed me onward with the wings of morn.
Oh ! far amidst the solitary seas,
Which were not made for man what man hath borne,
Answering their moan with his ! what *thou* didst bear,
My lost and loveliest ! while that secret care
Grew terror, and thy gentle spirit, worn
By its dull brooding weight, gave way at last,
Beholding me as one from hope forever cast !

XXXVIII.

For unto thee, as through all change, revealed
Mine inward being lay. In other eyes
I had to bow me yet, and make a shield,
To fence my burning bosom, of disguise ;
By the still hope sustained, ere long to win
Some sanctuary, whose green retreats within
My thoughts unfettered to their source might rise,
Like songs and scents of morn. But thou didst look
Through all my soul, and thine e'en unto fainting shook.

XXXIX.

Fallen, fallen, I seemed—yet, oh ! not less beloved,
Though from thy love was plucked the early pride,
And harshly by a gloomy faith reproved,
And scared with shame ! Though each young flower had died,
There was the root,—strong living, not the less
That all it yielded now was bitterness ;

Yet still such love as quits not misery's side,
Nor drops from guilt its ivy-like embrace,
Nor turns away from death's its pale heroic face.

XL.

Yes! thou hadst followed me through fear and flight!
Thou wouldst have followed had my pathway led
E'en to the scaffold ; had the flashing light
Of the raised axe made strong men shrink with dread,
Thou, midst the hush of thousands, wouldst have been
With thy clasped hands beside me kneeling seen,
And meekly bowing to the shame thy head—
The shame!—oh! making beautiful to view
The might of human love—fair thing! so bravely true.

XLI.

There was thine agony—to love so well
Where fear made love life's chastener. Heretofore,
Whate'er of earth's disquiet round thee fell,
Thy soul, o'erpassing its dim bounds, could soar
Away to sunshine, and thy clear eye speak
Most of the skies when grief most touched thy cheek.
Now, that far brightness faded, never more
Could thou lift heavenwards for its hope thy heart,
Since at heaven's gate it seemed that thou and I must part.

XLII.

Alas! and life hath moments when a glance—
(If thought to sudden watchfulness be stirred),
A flush—a fading of the cheek, perchance—
A word—less, less—the *cadence* of a word,
Lets in our gaze the mind's dim vale beneath,
Thence to bring haply knowledge fraught with death!
Even thus, what never from thy lip was heard
Broke on my soul. I knew that in thy sight
I stood, howe'er beloved, a recreant from the light.

XLIII.

Thy sad, sweet hymn, at eve, the seas along,—
Oh! the deep soul it breathed!—the love, the woe,
The fervor, poured in that full gush of song,
As it went floating through the fiery glow
Of the rich sunset!—bringing thoughts of Spain,
With all their vesper voices, o'er the main,
Which seemed responsive in its murmuring flow.
"*Ave sanctissima!*"—how oft that lay
Hath melted from my heart the martyr strength away!

Ave, sanctissima!
'Tis nightfall on the sea ;
Ora pro nobis!
Our souls rise to thee!

Watch us, while shadows lie
O'er the dim waters spread ;
Hear the heart's lonely sigh—
Thine too hath bled !

Thou that hast looked on death,
Aid us when death is near !
Whisper of heaven to faith ;
Sweet Mother, hear !

Ora pro nobis !
The wave must rock our sleep,
Ora, Mater, ora !
Thou star of the deep !

XLIV.

"*Ora pro nobis, Mater!*"—What a spell
Was in those notes, with day's last glory dying
On the flushed waters—seemed they not to swell
From the far dust wherein my sires were lying
With crucifix and sword ? Oh ! yet how clear
Comes their reproachful sweetness to mine ear !
"*Ora*"—with all the purple waves replying,
All my youth's visions rising in the strain—
And I had thought it much to bear the rack and chain !

XLV.

Torture ! the sorrow of affection's eye,
Fixing its meekness on the spirit's core,
Deeper, and teaching more of agony,
May pierce than many swords !—and this I bore
With a mute pang. Since I had vainly striven
From its free springs to pour the truth of heaven
Into thy trembling soul, my Leonor !
Silence rose up where hearts no hope could share
Alas ! for those that love, and may not blend in prayer !

XLVI.

We could not pray together midst the deep,
Which, like a floor of sapphire, round us lay,
Through days of splendor, nights too bright for sleep,
Soft, solemn, holy ! We were on our way
Unto the mighty Cordillera land,
With men whom tales of that world's golden strand
Had lured to leave their vines. Oh ! who shall say
What thoughts rose in us, when the tropic sky
Touched all its molten seas with sunset's alchemy !

XLVII.

Thoughts no more mingled ! Then came night—the intense
Dark blue—the burning stars ! I saw *thee* shine

Once more in thy serene magnificence,
O Southern Cross ! as when thy radiant sign
First drew my gaze of youth. No, not as then ;
I had been stricken by the darts of men
Since those fresh days ; and now thy light divine
Looked on mine anguish, while within me strove
The still small voice against the might of suffering love.

XLVIII.

But thou, the clear, the glorious ! thou wert pouring
Brilliance and joy upon the crystal wave,
While she that met thy ray with eyes adoring,
Stood in the lengthening shadow of the grave !
Alas ! I watched her dark religious glance,
As it still sought thee through the heaven's expanse,
Bright Cross ! and knew that I watched what gave
But passing lustre—shrouded soon to be—
A soft light found no more—no more on earth or sea !

XLIX.

I knew not all—yet something of unrest
Sat on my heart. Wake, ocean-wind ! I said ;
Waft us to land, in leafy freshness drest,
Where, through rich clouds of foliage o'er her head,
Sweet day may steal, and rills unseen go by,
Like singing voices, and the green earth lie
Starry with flowers, beneath her graceful tread !
But the calm bound us midst the glassy main :
Ne'er was her step to bend earth's living flowers again.

L.

Yes ! as if heaven upon the waves were sleeping,
Vexing my soul with quiet, there they lay,
All moveless, through their blue transparence keeping
The shadows of our sails, from day to day ;
While she——oh ! strongest is the strong heart's woe—
And yet I live ! I feel the sunshine's glow—
And I am he that looked, and saw decay
Steal o'er the fair of earth, the adored too much !
It is a fearful thing to love what death may touch.

LI.

A fearful thing that love and death may dwell
In the same world ! She faded on—and I
Blind to the last, there needed death to tell
My trusting soul that she *could* fade to die !
Yet, ere she parted, I had marked a change ;
But it breathed hope—'twas beautiful, though strange ;
Something of gladness in the melody
Of her low voice, and in her words a flight
Of airy thought—alas ! too perilously bright !

LII.

And a clear sparkle in her glance, yet wild,
And quick, and eager, like the flashing gaze
Of some all-wondering and awakening child,
That first the glories of the earth surveys.
How could it thus deceive me? She had worn
Around her, like the dewy mists of morn,
A pensive tenderness through happiest days;
And a soft world of dreams had seemed to lie
Still in her dark, and deep, and spiritual eye.

LIII.

And I could hope in that strange fire!—she died,
She died, with all its lustre on her mien!
The day was melting from the waters wide,
And through its long bright hours her thoughts had been,
It seemed, with restless and unwonted yearning,
To Spain's blue skies and dark sierras turning:
For her fond words were all of vintage-scene,
And flowering myrtle, and sweet citron's breath;
Oh! with what vivid hues life comes back oft on death!

LIV.

And from her lips the mountain-songs of old,
In wild, faint snatches, fitfully had sprung;
Songs of the orange bower, the Moorish hold,
The "*Rio verde*," on her soul that hung,
And thence flowed forth. But now the sun was low,
And watching by my side its last red glow,
That ever stills the heart, once more she sung
Her own soft "*Ora Mater!*" and the sound
Was e'en like love's farewell—so mournfully profound.

LV.

The boy had dropped to slumber at our feet;
"And I have lulled him to his smiling rest
Once more!" she said. I raised him—it was sweet,
Yet sad, to see the perfect calm, which blessed
His look that hour: for now her voice grew weak,
And on the flowery crimson of his cheek,
With her white lips, a long, long kiss she pressed,
Yet light, to wake him not. Then sank her head
Against my bursting heart. What did I clasp?—the dead!

LVI.

I called! To call what answers not our cries—
By what we loved to stand unseen, unheard—
With the loud passion of our tears and sighs,
To see but some cold glittering ringlet stirred;
And in the quenched eye's fixedness to gaze,
All vainly searching for the parted rays—

This is what waits us ! Dead !—with that chill word
To link our bosom-names ! For this we pour
Our souls upon the dust—nor tremble to adore !

LVII.

But the true parting came !—I looked my last
On the sad beauty of that slumbering face :
How could I think the lovely spirit passed,
Which there had left so tenderly its trace ?
Yet a dim awfulness was on the brow—
No ! not like sleep to look upon art thou,
Death, Death ! She lay a thing for earth's embrace,
To cover with spring-wreaths. For earth's ?—the wave
That gives the bier no flowers, makes moan above her grave !

LVIII.

On the mid-seas a knell !—for man was there,
Anguish and love—the mourner with his dead !
A long, low-rolling knell—a voice of prayer—
Dark glassy waters, like a desert spread—
And the pale-shining Southern Cross on high,
Its faint stars fading from a solemn sky,
Where mighty clouds before the dawn grew red :
Were these things round me ? Such o'er memory sweep
Wildly, when aught brings back that burial of the deep.

LIX.

Then the broad lonely sunrise !—and the plash
Into the sounding waves ! Around her head
They parted, with a glancing moment's flash,
Then shut—and all was still. And now thy bed
Is of their secrets, gentlest Leonor !
Once fairest of young brides !—and never more
Loved as thou wert, may human tear be shed
Above thy rest ! No mark the proud seas keep,
To show where he that wept may pause again to weep !

LX.

So the depths took thee ! Oh ! the sullen sense
Of desolation in that hour compressed !
Dust going down, a speck, amidst the immense
And gloomy waters, leaving on their breast
The trace a weed might leave there ! Dust !—the thing
Which to the heart was as a living spring
Of joy, with fearfulness of love possessed.
Thus sinking ! Love, joy, fear, all crushed to this—
And the wide heaven so far—so fathomless the abyss !

LXI.

Where the line sounds not, where the wrecks lie low,
What shall wake thence the dead ? Blest, blest, are they

That earth to earth intrust, for they may know
And tend the dwelling whence the slumberer's clay
Shall rise at last ; and bid the young flowers bloom,
That waft a breath of hope around the tomb ;
And kneel upon the dewy turf to pray !
But thou, what cave hath dimly chambered *thee?*
Vain dreams !—oh ! art thou not where there is no more sea ?

LXII.

The wind rose free and singing : when forever,
O'er that sole spot of all the watery plain,
I could have bent my sight with fond endeavor
Down, where its treasure was, its glance to strain ;
Then rose the reckless wind ! Before our prow
The white foam flashed—ay, joyously, and thou
Wert left with all the solitary main
Around thee—and thy beauty in my heart,
And thy meek, sorrowing love—oh ! where could *that* depart ?

LXIII.

I will not speak of woe ; I may not tell—
Friend tells not such to friends—the thoughts which rent
My fainting spirit, when its wild farewell
Across the billows to thy grave was sent,
Thou, there most lonely ! He that sits above,
In His calm glory, will forgive the love
His creatures bear each other, even if blent
With a vain worship ; for its close is dim
Ever with grief which leads the wrung soul back to Him !

LXIV.

And with a milder pang if now I bear
To think of thee in thy forsaken rest,
If from my heart be lifted the despair,
The sharp remorse with healing influence pressed,
If the soft eyes that visit me in sleep
Look not reproach, though still they seem to weep ;
It is that He my sacrifice hath blessed,
And filled my bosom, through its inmost cell,
With a deep chastening sense that all at last is well.

LXV.

Yes ! thou art now—Oh ! wherefore doth the thought
Of the wave dashing o'er thy long bright hair,
The sea-weed into its dark tresses wrought,
The sand thy pillow—thou that wert so fair !
Come o'er me still ! Earth, earth !—it is the hold
Earth ever keeps on that of earthly mould !
But *thou* art breathing now in purer air,
I will believe, and freed from all of error,
Which blighted here the root of thy sweet life with terror.

LXVI.

And if the love, which here was passing light,
Went with what died not—oh ! that *this* we knew,
But this !—that through the silence of the night,
Some voice, of all the lost ones and the true,
Would speak, and say, if in their far repose,
We are yet aught of what we were to those
We call the dead ! Their passionate adieu,
Was it but breath, to perish ? Holier trust
Be mine !—thy love *is* there, but purified from dust !

LXVII.

A thing all heavenly !—cleared from that which hung
As a dim cloud between us, heart and mind !
Loosed from the fear, the grief, whose tendrils flung
A chain so darkly with its growth entwined.
This is my hope !—though when the sunset fades,
When forests rock the midnight on their shades,
When tones of wail are in the rising wind,
Across my spirit some faint doubt may sigh ;
For the strong hours *will* sway this frail mortality !

LXVIII.

We have been wanderers since those days of woe,
Thy boy and I ! As wild birds tend their young,
So have I tended him—my bounding roe !
The high Peruvian solitudes among ;
And o'er the Andes' torrents borne his form,
Where our frail bridge had quivered 'midst the storm
But there the war-notes of my country rung,
And, smitten deep of heaven and man, I fled
To hide in shades unpierced a marked and weary head.

LXIX.

But he went on in gladness—that fair child !
Save when at times his bright eye seemed to dream
And his young lips, which then no longer smiled,
Asked of his mother ! That was but a gleam
Of memory, fleeting fast ; and then his play
Through the wild Llanos cheered again our way,
And by the mighty Oronoco stream,
On whose lone margin we have heard at morn,
From the mysterious rocks, the sunrise music borne.

LXX.

So like a spirit's voice ! a harping tone,
Lovely, yet ominous to mortal ear—
Such as might reach us from a world unknown,
Troubling man's heart with thrills of joy and fear
'Twas sweet !—yet those deep southern shades oppressed
My soul with stillness, like the calms that rest

On melancholy waves : I sighed to hear
Once more earth's breezy sounds, her foliage fanned,
And turned to seek the wilds of the red hunter's land.

LXXI.

And we have won a bower of refuge now,
In this fresh waste, the breath of whose repose
Hath cooled, like dew, the fever of my brow,
And whose green oaks and cedars round me close
As temple walls and pillars, that exclude
Earth's haunted dreams from their free solitude ;
All, save the image and the thought of those
Before us gone—our loved of early years,
Gone where affection's cup hath lost the taste of tears.

LXXII.

I see a star—eve's first-born !—in whose train
Past scenes, words, looks, come back. The arrowy spire
Of the lone cypress, as of wood-girt fane,
Rests dark and still amidst a heaven of fire ;
The pine gives forth its odors, and the lake
Gleams like one ruby, and the soft winds wake
Till every string of nature's solemn lyre
Is touched to answer ; its most secret tone
Drawn from each tree, for each hath whispers all its own.

LXXIII.

And hark ! another murmur on the air,
Not of the hidden rills or quivering shades !—
That is the cataract's, which the breezes bear,
Filling the leafy twilight of the glades
With hollow surge-like sounds, as from the bed
Of the blue, mournful seas, that keep the dead :
But *they* are far ! The low sun here pervades
Dim forest arches, bathing with red gold
Their stems, till each is made a marvel to behold.

LXXIV.

Gorgeous, yet full of gloom ! In such an hour
The vesper-melody of dying bells
Wanders through Spain, from each gray convent's tower
O'er shining rivers poured and olive dells,
By every peasant heard, and muleteer,
And hamlet, round my home : and I am here,
Living again through all my life's farewells,
In these vast woods, where farewell ne'er was spoken,
And sole I lift to heaven a sad heart—yet unbroken !

LXXV.

In such an hour are told the hermit's beads ;
With the white sail the seaman's hymn floats by.

Peace be with all ! whate'er their varying creeds,
With all that send up holy thoughts on high !
Come to me, boy ! by Guadalquiver's vines,
By every stream of Spain, as day declines,
Man's prayers are mingled in the rosy sky.
We, too, will pray ; nor yet unheard, my child !
Of Him whose voice *we* hear at eve amidst the wild.

LXXVI.

At eve ? Oh, through all hours ! From dark dreams
Awakening, I look forth, and learn the might
Of solitude, while thou art breathing soft,
And low, my loved one ! on the breast of night.
I look forth on the stars—the shadowy sleep
Of forests—and the lake whose gloomy deep
Sends up red sparkles to the fire-flies' light :
A lonely world !—even fearful to man's thought,
But for his presence felt, whom here my soul hath sought.

THE ABENCERRAGE.

[The events with which the following tale is interwoven are related in the *Historia de las Guerras Civiles de Granada*. They occurred in the reign of Abo Abdeli, or Abdali, the last Moorish king of that city, called by the Spaniards El Rey Chico. The conquest of Granada by Ferdinand and Isabella is said by some historians to have been greatly facilitated by the Abencerrages, whose defection was the result of the repeated injuries they had received from the king, at the instigation of the Zegris. One of the most beautiful halls of the Alhambra is pointed out as the scene where so many of the former celebrated tribe were massacred ; and it still retains their name, being called the "Sala de los Abencerrages." Many of the most interesting old Spanish ballads relate to the events of this chivalrous and romantic period.]

" Le Maure ne se venge pas parce que sa colère dure encore, mais parce que la vengeance seule peut écarter de sa tête le poids d'infamie dont il est accablé.—Il se venge, parce qu'à ses yeux il n'y a qu'une âme basse qui puisse pardonner les affronts ; et il nourrit sa rancune, parce que s'il la sentoit s'éteindre, il croiroit avec elle, avoir perdu une vertu."

SISMONDI.

LONELY and still are now thy marble halls,
Thou fair Alhambra ! there the feast is o'er ;
And with the murmur of thy fountain-falls,
Blend the wild tones of minstrelsy no more.

Hushed are the voices that in years gone by
Have mourned, exulted, menaced, through thy towers,
Within thy pillared courts the grass waves high,
And all uncultured bloom thy fairy bowers.

Unheeded there the flowering myrtle blows,
Through tall arcades unmarked the sunbeam smiles,

And many a tint of softened brilliance throws
O'er fretted walls and shining peristyles.

And well might Fancy deem thy fabrics lone,
So vast, so silent, and so wildly fair,
Some charmed abode of beings all unknown,
Powerful and viewless, children of the air.

For there no footstep treads the enchanted ground,
There not a sound the deep repose pervades,
Save winds and founts, diffusing freshness round,
Through the light domes and graceful colonnades.

Far other tones have swelled those courts along,
In days romance yet fondly loves to trace ;
The clash of arms, the voice of choral song,
The revels, combats, of a vanished race.

And yet awhile, at Fancy's potent call,
Shall rise that race, the chivalrous, the bold ;
Peopling once more each fair, forsaken hall,
With stately forms, the knights and chiefs of old.

—The sun declines—upon Nevada's height
There dwells a mellow flush of rosy light ;
Each soaring pinnacle of mountain snow
Smiles in the richness of that parting glow,
And Darro's wave reflects each passing dye
That melts and mingles in the empurpled sky.
Fragrance, exhaled from rose and citron bower,
Blends with the dewy freshness of the hour :
Hushed are the winds, and Nature seems to sleep
In light and stillness ; wood, and tower, and steep,
Are dyed with tints of glory, only given
To the rich evening of a southern heaven ;
Tints of the sun, whose bright farewell is fraught
With all that art hath dreamt, but never caught.
—Yes, Nature sleeps ; but not with her at rest
The fiery passions of the human breast.
Hark ! from the Alhambra's towers what stormy sound,
Each moment deepening, wildly swells around ?
Those are no tumults of a festal throng,
Not the light zambra, nor the choral song :
The combat rages—'tis the shout of war,
'Tis the loud clash of shield and scimitar.
Within the Hall of Lions, where the rays
Of eve, yet lingering, on the fountain blaze ;
There, girt and guarded by his Zegri bands,
And stern in wrath, the Moorish monarch stands :
There the strife centres—swords around him wave ;
There bleed the fallen, there contend the brave,
While echoing domes return the battle-cry,
"Revenge and freedom ! let the tyrant die !"

And onward rushing, and prevailing still,
Court, hall, and tower, the fierce avengers fill.

But first the bravest of that gallant train,
Where foes are mightiest, charging ne'er in vain ;
In his red hand the sabre glancing bright,
His dark eye flashing with a fiercer light,
Ardent, untired, scarce conscious that he bleeds,
His Aben-Zurrahs there young Hamet leads ;
While swells his voice that wild acclaim on high,
"Revenge and freedom ! let the tyrant die !"

Yes ! trace the footsteps of the warrior's wrath
By helm and corslet shattered in his path,
And by the thickest harvest of the slain,
And by the marble's deepest crimson stain
Search through the serried fight, where loudest cries
From triumph, anguish, or despair, arise ;
And brightest where the shivering falchions glare,
And where the ground is reddest—he is there.
Yes, that young arm, amidst the Zegri host,
Hath well avenged a sire, a brother, lost.

They perished—nor as heroes should have died.
On the red field, in victory's hour of pride,
In all the glow and sunshine of their fame,
And proudly smiling as the death-pang came :
Oh ! had they *thus* expired, a warrior's tear
Had flowed, almost in triumph, o'er their bier.
For thus alone the brave should weep for those
Who brightly pass in glory to repose.
—Not such their fate—a tyrant's sterm command
Doomed them to fall by some ignoble hand,
As, with the flower of all their high-born race,
Summoned Abdallah's royal feast to grace,
Fearless in heart, no dream of danger nigh,
They sought the banquet's gilded hall—to die.
Betrayed, unarmed, they fell—the fountain wave
Flowed crimson with the life-blood of the brave,
Till far the fearful tidings of their fate
Through the wide city rang from gate to gate,
And of that lineage each surviving son
Rushed to the scene where vengeance might be won.

For this young Hamet mingles in the strife,
Leader of battle, prodigal of life,
Urging his followers still their foes, beset,
Stand faint and breathless, but undaunted yet.
Brave Aben-Zurrahs, on ! one effort more,
Yours is the triumph, and the conflict o'er.

But lo ! descending o'er the darkened hall,
The twilight shadows fast and deeply fall,

Nor yet the strife hath ceased—though scarce they know
Through that thick gloom, the brother from the foe ;
Till the moon rises with her cloudless ray,
The peaceful moon, and gives them light to slay.

Where lurks Abdallah ?—'midst his yielding train,
They seek the guilty monarch, but in vain.
He lies not numbered with the valiant dead,
His champions round him have not vainly bled ;
But when the twilight spread her shadowy veil,
And his last warriors found each effort fail,
In wild despair he fled—a trusted few,
Kindred in crime, are still in danger true
And o'er the scene of many a martial deed,
The Vega's green expanse, his flying footsteps lead.
He passed the Alhambra's calm and lovely bowers,
Where slept the glistening leaves and folded flowers,
In dew and starlight—there, from grot and cave,
Gushed, in wild music, many a sparkling wave ;
There, on each breeze, the breath of fragrance rose,
And all was freshness, beauty and repose.

But thou, dark monarch ! in thy bosom reign
Storms that, once roused, shall never sleep again.
Oh ! vainly bright is Nature in the course
Of him who flies from terror or remorse !
A spell is round him which obscures her bloom,
And dims her skies with shadows of the tomb ;
There smiles no Paradise on earth so fair,
But guilt will raise avenging phantoms there.
Abdallah heeds not, though the light gale roves
Fraught with rich odor, stolen from orange-groves ;
Hears not the sounds from wood and brook that rise,
Wild notes of Nature's vesper-melodies ;
Marks not how lovely, on the mountain's head,
Moonlight and snow their mingling lustre spread ;
But urges onward, till his weary band,
Worn with their toil, a moment's pause demand.
He stops, and turning, on Granada's fanes
In silence gazing, fixed awhile remains
In stern, deep silence—o'er his feverish brow,
And burning cheek, pure breezes freshly blow,
But waft, in fitful murmurs, from afar,
Sounds indistinctly fearful,—as of war.
What meteor bursts, with sudden blaze, on high,
O'er the blue clearness of the starry sky ?
Awful it rises, like some Genie-form,
Seen 'midst the redness of the desert storm,
Magnificently dread—above, below,
Spreads the wild splendor of its deepening glow.
Lo ! from the Alhambra's towers the vivid glare
Streams through the still transparence of the air !
Avenging crowds have lit the mighty pyre,
Which feeds that waving pyramid of fire ;

And dome and minaret, river, wood, and height,
From dim perspective start to ruddy light.

Oh Heaven ! the anguish of Abdallah's soul,
The rage, though fruitless, yet beyond control !
Yet must he cease to gaze, and raving fly
For life—such life as makes it bliss to die !
On yon green height, the mosque, but half revealed
Through cypress-groves, a safe retreat may yield.
Thither his steps are bent—yet oft he turns,
Watching that fearful beacon as it burns.
But paler grow the sinking flames at last,
Flickering they fade, their crimson light is past ;
And spiry vapors, rising o'er the scene,
Mark where the terrors of their wrath have been.
And now his feet have reached that lonely pile,
Where grief and terror may repose awhile ;
Embowered it stands, 'midst wood and cliff on high,
Through the gray rocks, a torrent sparkling nigh ;
He hails the scene where every care should cease,
And all—except the heart he brings—is peace.

There is a deep stillness in those halls of state
Where the loud cries of conflict rang so late ;
Stillness like that, when fierce the Kamsin's blast
Hath o'er the dwellings of the desert passed.
Fearful the calm—nor voice, not step, nor breath,
Disturbs that scene of beauty and of death :
Those vaulted roofs re-echo not a sound,
Save the wild gush of waters—murmuring round
In ceaseless melodies of plaintive tone,
Through chambers peopled by the dead alone.
O'er the mosaic floors, with carnage red,
Breastplate, and shield, and cloven helm are spread
In mingled fragments—glittering to the light
Of yon still moon, whose rays, yet softly bright,
Their streaming lustre tremulously shed,
And smile, in placid beauty o'er the dead :
O'er features where the fiery spirit's trace
E'en death itself is powerless to efface ;
O'er those who, flushed with ardent youth, awoke,
When glowing morn in gloom and radiance broke,
Nor dreamt how near the dark and frozen sleep
Which hears not Glory call, nor Anguish weep ;
In the low silent house, the narrow spot,
Home of forgetfulness—and soon forgot.

But slowly fade the stars—the night is o'er—
Morn beams on those who hail her light no more
Slumberers who ne'er shall wake on earth again,
Mourners, who call the loved, the lost, in vain.
Yet smiles the day—oh ! not for mortal tear
Doth nature deviate from her calm career ;

Nor is the earth less laughing or less fair,
Though breaking hearts her gladness may not share.
O'er the cold urn the beam of summer glows,
O'er fields of blood the zephyr freshly blows;
Bright shines the sun, though all be dark below,
And skies are cloudless o'er a world of woe,
And flowers renewed in spring's green pathway bloom,
Alike to grace the banquet and the tomb.

Within Granada's walls the funeral-rite
Attends that day of loveliness and light:
And many a chief, with dirges and with tears,
Is gathered to the brave of other years:
And Hamet, as beneath the cypress-shade
His martyred brother and his sire are laid,
Feels every deep resolve, and burning thought
Of ampler vengeance, e'en to passion wrought;
Yet is the hour afar—and he must brood
O'er those dark dreams awhile in solitude.
Tumult and rage are hushed—another day
In still solemnity hath passed away,
In the deep slumber of exhausted wrath,
The calm that follows in the tempest's path.

And now Abdallah leaves yon peaceful fane,
His ravaged city traversing again.
No sound of gladness his approach precedes,
No splendid pageant the procession leads;
Where'er he moves the silent streets along,
Broods a stern quiet o'er the sullen throng.
No voice is heard; but in each altered eye,
Once brightly beaming when his steps were nigh,
And in each look of those whose love hath fled
From all on earth to slumber with the dead,
Those by his guilt made desolate, and thrown
On the bleak wilderness of life alone—
In youth's quick glance of scarce-dissembled rage,
And the pale mien of calmly-mournful age,
May well be read a dark and fearful tale
Of thought that ill the indignant heart can veil,
And passion, like the hushed volcano's power,
That waits in stillness its appointed hour.

No more the clarion from Granada's walls,
Heard o'er the Vega, to the tourney calls;
No more her graceful daughters, throned on high,
Bend o'er the lists the darkly-radiant eye;
Silence and gloom her palaces o'erspread,
And song is hushed, and pageantry is fled.
—Weep, fated city! o'er thy heroes weep—
Low in the dust the sons of glory sleep!
Furled are their banners in the lonely hall,
Their trophied shields hang mouldering on the wall,

Wildly their chargers range the pastures o'er,
The voice in battle shall be heard no more ;
And they, who still thy tyrant's wrath survive,
Whom he hath wronged too deeply to forgive,
That race, of lineage high, of worth approved,
The chivalrous, the princely, the beloved—
Thine Aben-Zurrahs—they no more shall wield
In thy proud cause the conquering lance and shield :
Condemned to bid the cherished scenes farewell
Where the loved ashes of their fathers dwell,
And far o'er foreign plains, as exiles, roam,
Their land the desert, and the grave their home.
Yet there is one shall see that race depart,
In deep, though silent, agony of heart ;
One whose dark fate must be to mourn alone,
Unseen her sorrows, and their cause unknown,
And veil her heart, and teach her cheek to wear
That smile, in which the spirit hath no share ;
Like the bright beams that shed their fruitless glow
O'er the cold solitude of Alpine snow.

Soft, fresh, and silent, is the midnight hour,
And the young Zayda seeks her lonely bower ;
That Zegri maid, within whose gentle mind
One name is deeply, secretly enshrined.
That name in vain stern Reason would efface ;
Hamet ! 'tis thine, thou foe to all her race !

And yet not hers in bitterness to prove
The sleepless pangs of unrequited love ;
Pangs, which the rose of wasted youth consume,
And make the heart of all delight the tomb,
Check the free spirit in its eagle-flight,
And the spring-morn of early genius blight ;
Nor such her grief—though now she wakes to weep,
While tearless eyes enjoy the honey-dews of sleep.

A step treads lightly through the citron shade,
Lightly, but by the rustling leaves betrayed—
Doth her young hero seek that well-known spot,
Scene of past hours that ne'er may be forgot ?
'Tis he—but changed that eye, whose glance of fire
Could, like a sunbeam, hope and joy inspire,
As, luminous with youth, with ardor fraught,
It spoke of glory to the inmost thought ;
Thence the bright spirit's eloquence hath fled,
And in its wild expression may be read
Stern thoughts and fierce resolves—now veiled in shade,
And now in characters of fire portrayed.
Changed e'en his voice—as thus its mournful tone
Wakes in her heart each feeling of his own.

"Zayda, my doom is fixed—another day
And the wronged exile shall be far away ;

Far from the scenes where still his heart must be,
His home of youth, and more than all—from thee.
Oh ! what a cloud hath gathered o'er my lot,
Since last we met on this fair tranquil spot !
Lovely as then, the soft and silent hour,
And not a rose hath faded from thy bower ;
But I—my hopes the tempest hath o'erthrown,
And changed my heart, to all but thee alone.
Farewell, high thoughts ! inspiring hopes of praise !
Heroic visions of my early days !
In me the glories of my race must end—
The exile hath no country to defend !
E'en in life's morn my dreams of pride are o'er,
Youth's buoyant spirit wakes for me no more,
And one wild feeling in my altered breast
Broods darkly o'er the ruins of the rest.
Yet fear not thou—to thee in good or ill,
The heart, so sternly tried, is faithful still !
But when my steps are distant, and my name
Thou hearest no longer in the song of fame ;
When Time steals on in silence to efface
Of early love each pure and sacred trace,
Causing our sorrows and our hopes to seem
But as the moonlight pictures of a dream,—
Still shall thy soul be with me, in the truth
And all the fervor of affection's youth ?
If such thy love, one beam of heaven shall play
In lonely beauty o'er thy wanderer's way."

"Ask not, if such my love ! Oh ! trust the mind
To grief so long, so silently resigned !
Let the light spirit, ne'er by sorrow taught
The pure and lofty constancy of thought,
Its fleeting trials eager to forget,
Rise with elastic power o'er each regret !
Fostered in tears, *our* young affection grew,
And I have learned to suffer and be true.
Deem not my love a frail, ephemeral flower,
Nursed by soft sunshine and the balmy shower ;
No ! 'tis the child of tempests, and defies,
And meets unchanged, the anger of the skies !
Too well I feel, with grief's prophetic heart,
That ne'er to meet in happier days, we part.
We part ! and e'en this agonizing hour,
When love first feels his own o'erwhelming power,
Shall soon to Memory's fixed and tearful eye
Seem almost happiness—for thou wert nigh !
Yes ! when this heart in solitude shall bleed,
As days to days all wearily succeed,
When doomed to weep in loneliness, 'twill be
Almost like rapture to have wept with thee.

"But thou, my Hamet, thou canst yet bestow
All that of joy my blighted lot can know.

Oh ! be thou still the high-souled and the brave,
To whom my first and fondest vows I gave ;
In thy proud fame's untarnished beauty still
The lofty visions of my youth fulfil.
So shall it soothe me, 'midst my heart's despair,
To hold undimmed one glorious image there ! "

"Zayda, my best-beloved ! my words too well,
Too soon, thy bright illusions must dispel ;
Yet must my soul to thee unveiled be shown,
And all its dreams and all its passions known.
Thou shalt not be deceived—for pure as heaven
Is thy young love, in faith and fervor given.
I said my heart was changed—and would thy thought
Explore the ruin by thy kindred wrought,
In fancy trace the land whose towers and fanes,
Crushed by the earthquake, strew its ravaged plains ;
And such that heart—where desolation's hand
Hath blighted all that once was fair or grand !
But Vengeance, fixed upon her burning throne,
Sits, 'midst the wreck, in silence and alone ;
And I, in stern devotion at her shrine,
Each softer feeling, but my love, resign.
—Yes ! they whose spirits all my thoughts control,
Who hold dread converse with my thrilling soul ;
They, the betrayed, the sacrificed, the brave,
Who fill a blood-stained and untimely grave,
Must be avenged ! and pity and remorse
In that stern cause are banished from my course.
Zayda, thou tremblest—and thy gentle breast
Shrinks from the passions that destroy my rest ;
Yet shall thy form, in many a stormy hour,
Pass brightly o'er my soul with softening power,
And, oft recalled, thy voice beguile my lot,
Like some sweet lay, once heard, and ne'er forgot.

"But the night wanes—the hours too swiftly fly,
The bitter moment of farewell draws nigh ;
Yet, loved one ! weep not thus—in joy or pain,
Oh ! trust thy Hamet, we shall meet again !
Yes, we shall meet ! and haply smile at last
On all the clouds and conflicts of the past.
On that fair vision teach thy thoughts to dwell,
Nor deem these mingling tears our last farewell ! "

Is the voice hushed, whose loved, expressive tone
Thrilled to her heart—and doth she weep alone ?
Alone she weeps ; that hour of parting o'er,
When shall the pang it leaves be felt no more ?
The gale breathes light, and fans her bosom fair,
Showering the dewy rose-leaves o'er her hair ;
But ne'er for her shall dwell reviving power
In balmy dew, soft breeze, or fragrant flower,

To wake once more that calm, serene delight,
The soul's young bloom, which passion's breath could blight.
The smiling stillness of life's morning hour,
Ere yet the day-star burns in all his power
Meanwhile through groves of deep luxurious shade.
In the rich foliage of the South arrayed,
Hamet, ere dawns the earliest blush of day,
Bends to the vale of tombs his pensive way.
Fair is that scene where palm and cypress wave
On high o'er many an Aben-Zurrah's grave.
Lonely and fair, its fresh and glittering leaves
With the young myrtle there the laurel weaves,
To canopy the dead ; nor wanting there
Flowers to the turf, nor fragrance to the air,
Nor wood-bird's note, nor fall of plaintive stream—
Wild music, soothing to the mourner's dream.
There sleep the chiefs of old—their combats o'er,
The voice of glory thrills their hearts no more.
Unheard by them the awakening clarion blows ;
The sons of war at length in peace repose.
No martial note is in the gale that sighs,
Where proud their trophied sepulchres arise
'Mid founts, and shades, and flowers of brightest bloom,
As, in his native vale, some shepherd's tomb.

There, where the trees their thickest foliage spread
Dark o'er that silent valley of the dead ;
Where two fair pillars rise, embowered and lone,
Not yet with ivy clad, with moss o'ergrown,
Young Hamet kneels—while thus his vows are poured,
The fearful vows that consecrate his sword :
—"Spirit of him who first within my mind
Each loftier aim, each nobler thought enshrined,
And taught my steps the line of light to trace,
Left by the glorious fathers of my race,
Hear thou my voice—for mine is with me still,
In every dream its tones my bosom thrill,
In the deep calm of midnight they are near,
'Midst busy throngs they vibrate on my ear,
Still murmuring 'vengeance !'—nor in vain the call.
Few, few shall triumph in a hero's fall !
Cold as thine own to glory and to fame,
Within my heart there lives one only aim ;
There, till the oppressor for thy fate atone,
Concentring every thought, it reigns alone.
I will not weep—revenge, not grief, must be,
And blood, not tears, an offering meet for thee ;
But the dark hour of stern delight will come,
And thou shall triumph, warrior ! in thy tomb.

"Thou, too, my brother ! thou art passed away,
Without thy fame, in life's fair-dawning day.
Son of the brave ! of thee no trace will shine
In the proud annals of thy lofty line ;

Nor shall thy deeds be deathless in the lays
That hold communion with the after-days.
Yet, by the wreaths thou mightst have nobly won,
Hadst thou but lived till rose thy noontide sun:
By glory lost, I swear! by hope betrayed,
Thy fate shall amply, dearly, be repaid;
War with thy foes I deem a holy strife,
And, to avenge thy death, devote my life.
"Hear ye my vows, O spirits of the slain!
Hear, and be with me on the battle-plain!
At noon, at midnight, still around me bide,
Rise on my dreams, and tell me how ye died!"

CANTO II.

"Oh! ben provvide il Cielo
Ch' Uom per delitti mai lieto non sia."
ALFIERI.

FAIR land! of chivalry the old domain,
Land of the vine and olive, lovely Spain!
Though not for thee with classic shores to vie
In charms that fix the enthusiast's pensive eye;
Yet hast thou scenes of beauty, richly fraught
With all that wakes the glow of lofty thought;
Fountains, and vales, and rocks, whose ancient name
High deeds have raised to mingle with their fame.
Those scenes are peaceful now: the citron blows,
Wild spreads the myrtle, where the brave repose.
No sound of battle swells on Douro's shore,
And banners wave on Ebro's banks no more.
But who, unmoved, unawed, shall coldly tread
Thy fields that sepulchre the mighty dead?
Blest be that soil! where England's heroes share
The grave of chiefs, for ages slumbering there:
Whose names are glorious in romantic lays,
The wild, sweet chronicles of elder days—
By goatherd lone, and rude serrano sung,
Thy cypress dells, and vine-clad rocks among:
How oft those rocks have echoed to the tale
Of knights who fell in Roncesvalles' vale;
Of him, renowned in old heroic lore,
First of the brave, the gallant Campeador;
Of those, the famed in song, who proudly died
When "Rio Verde" rolled a crimson tide;
Or that high name, by Garcilaso's might,
On the green Vega won in single fight.

Round fair Granada, deepening from afar,
O'er that green Vega rose the din of war.
At morn or eve no more the sunbeams shone
O'er a calm scene, in pastoral beauty lone;

On helm and corslet tremulous they glanced,
On shield and spear in quivering lustre danced.
Far as the sight by clear Xenil could rove,
Tents rose around, and banners glanced above.
And steeds in gorgeous trappings, armor bright
With gold, reflecting every tint of light,
And many a floating plume, and blazoned shield,
Diffused romantic splendor o'er the field.

There swell those sounds that bid the life-blood start
Swift to the mantling cheek and beating heart.
The clang of echoing steel, the charger's neigh,
The measured tread of hosts in war's array ;
And, oh ! that music, whose exulting breath
Speaks but of glory on the road to death ;
In whose wild voice there dwells inspiring power
To wake the stormy joy of danger's hour ;
To nerve the arm, the spirit to sustain,
Rouse from despondence, and support in pain ;
And, midst the deepening tumults of the strife,
Teach every pulse to thrill with more than life.

High o'er the camp, in many a broidered fold,
Floats to the wind a standard rich with gold :
There, imaged on the cross, *His* form appears
Who drank for man the bitter cup of tears—
His form, whose word recalled the spirit fled,
Now borne by hosts to guide them o'er the dead !
O'er yon fair walls to plant the cross on high,
Spain hath sent forth her flower of chivalry.
Fired with that ardor which, in days of yore,
To Syrian plains the bold crusaders bore ;
Elate with lofty hope, with martial zeal,
They come, the gallant children of Castile ;
The proud, the calmly dignified :—and there
Ebro's dark sons with haughty mien repair,
And those who guide the fiery steed of war
From yon rich province of the western star.

But thou, conspicuous 'midst the glitt'ring scene,
Stern grandeur stamped upon thy princely mien ;
Known by the foreign garb, the silvery vest,
The snow-white charger, and the azure crest,
Young Aben-Zurrah ! 'midst that host of foes,
Why shines *thy* helm, thy Moorish lance ? Disclose !
Why rise the tents where dwell thy kindred train,
O son of Afric, 'midst the sons of Spain ?
Hast thou with these thy nation's fall conspired,
Apostate chief ! by hope of vengeance fired ?
How art thou changed ! Still first in every fight,
Hamet, the Moor ! Castile's devoted knight !
There dwells a fiery lustre in thine eye,
But not the light that shone in days gone by ;

There is wild ardor in thy look and tone,
But not the soul's expression once thine own,
Nor aught like peace within. Yet who shall say
What secret thoughts thine inmost heart may sway?
No eye but heaven's may pierce that curtained breast,
Whose joys and griefs alike are unexpressed.

There hath been combat on the tented plain;
The Vega's turf is red with many a stain;
And, rent and trampled, banner, crest, and shield,
Tell of a fierce and well-contested field:
But all is peaceful now—the west is bright
With the rich splendor of departing light;
Mulhacen's peak, half lost amidst the sky,
Glows like a purple evening-cloud on high,
And tints, that mock the pencil's art, o'erspread
The eternal snow that crowns Veleta's head;
While the warm sunset o'er the landscape throws
A solemn beauty, and a deep repose.
Closed are the toils and tumults of the day,
And Hamet wanders from the camp away,
In silent musings wrapt;—the slaughtered brave
Lie thickly strewn by Darro's rippling wave.
Soft fall the dews—but other drops have dyed
The scented shrubs that fringe the river side,
Beneath whose shade, as ebbing life retired,
The wounded sought a shelter—and expired.
Lonely, and lost in thoughts of other days,
By the bright windings of the stream he strays,
Till, more remote from battle's ravaged scene,
All is repose, and solitude serene.
There, 'neath an olive's ancient shade reclined,
Whose rustling foliage waves in evening's wind,
The harassed warrior, yielding to the power,
The mild sweet influence of the tranquil hour,
Feels, by degrees, a long-forgotten calm
Shed over his troubled soul unwonted balm;
His wrongs, his woes, his dark and dubious lot,
The past, the future, are awhile forgot;
And Hope, scarce owned, yet stealing o'er his breast,
Half dares to whisper, "Thou shalt yet be blest!"

Such his vague musings—but a plaintive sound
Breaks on the deep and solemn stillness round;
A low, half-stifled moan, that seems to rise
From life and death's contending agonies.
He turns: Who shares with him that lonely shade?
—A youthful warrior on his deathbed laid.
All rent and stained his broidered Moorish vest,
The corslet shattered on his bleeding breast;
In his cold hand the broken falchion strained,
With life's last force convulsively retained;
His plumage soiled with dust, with crimson dyed
And the red lance, in fragments, by his side;

He lies forsaken—pillowed on his shield,
His helmet raised, his lineaments revealed.
Pale is that quivering lip, and vanished now
The light once throned on that commanding brow,
And o'er that fading eye, still upward cast,
The shades of death are gathering dark and fast.
Yet, as yon rising moon her light serene
Sheds the pale olive's waving boughs between,
Too well can Hamet's conscious heart retrace,
Though changed thus fearfully, that pallid face,
Whose every feature to his soul conveys
Some bitter thought of long-departed days.

"Oh! is it thus," he cries, "we meet at last?
Friend of my soul in years forever past!
Hath fate but led me hither to behold
The last dread struggle, ere that heart is cold,—
Receive thy latest agonizing breath,
And, with vain pity, soothe the pangs of death?
Yet let me bear thee hence; while life remains,
E'en though thus feebly circling through thy veins,
Some healing balm thy sense may still revive,
Hope is not lost—and Osmyn yet may live!
And blest were he, whose timely care should save
A heart so noble, e'en from glory's grave."

Roused by those accents, from his lowly bed
The dying warrior faintly lifts his head;
O'er Hamet's mien, with vague, uncertain gaze,
His doubtful glance awhile bewildered strays;
Till, by degrees, a smile of proud disdain
Lights up those features late convulsed with pain;
A quivering radiance flashes from his eye,
That seems too pure, too full of soul to die;
And the mind's grandeur, in its parting hour,
Looks from that brow with more than wonted power.

"Away!" he cries, in accents of command,
And proudly waves his cold and trembling hand,
"Apostate, hence! my soul shall soon be free,
E'en now it soars, disdaining aid from thee:
'Tis not for thee to close the fading eyes
Of him who faithful to his country dies;
Not for *thy* hand to raise the drooping head
Of him who sinks to rest on glory's bed.
Soon shall these pangs be closed, this conflict o'er,
And worlds be mine where thou canst never soar;
Be thine existence with a blighted name,
Mine the bright death which seals a warrior's fame!"

The glow hath vanished from his cheek—his eye
Hath lost that beam of parting energy;
Frozen and fixed it seems—his brow is chill;
One struggle more—that noble heart is still.

Departed warrior ! were thy mortal throes,
Were thy last pangs, ere Nature found repose,
More keen, more bitter, than the envenomed dart
Thy dying words have left in Hamet's heart ?
Thy pangs were transient ; *his* shall sleep no more,
Till life's delirious dream itself is o'er ;
But thou shalt rest in glory, and thy grave
Be the pure altar of the patriot brave.
Oh, what a change that little hour hath wrought
In the high spirit and unbending thought !
Yet, from himself each keen regret to hide,
Still Hamet struggles with indignant pride ;
While his soul rises, gathering all its force,
To meet the fearful conflict with remorse.

To thee, at length, whose artless love hath been
His own, unchanged, through many a stormy scene;
Zayda ! to thee his heart for refuge flies ;
Thou still art faithful to affection's ties.
Yes ! let the world upbraid, let foes contemn,
Thy gentle breast the tide will firmly stem ;
And soon thy smile, and soft consoling voice,
Shall bid his troubled soul again rejoice.

Within Granada's walls are hearts and hands
Whose aid in secret Hamet yet commands ;
Nor hard the task, at some propitious hour,
To win his silent way to Zayda's bower,
When night and peace are brooding o'er the world,
When mute the clarions, and the banners furled.
That hour is come—and, o'er the arms he bears,
A wandering fakir's garb the chieftain wears :
Disguise that ill from piercing eye could hide
The lofty port, and glance of martial pride ;
But night befriends—through paths obscure he passed,
And hailed the lone and lovely scene at last ;
Young Zayda's chosen haunt, the fair alcove,
The sparkling fountain, and the orange grove :
Calm in the moonlight smiles the still retreat,
As formed alone for happy hearts to meet.
For happy hearts?—not such as hers, who there
Bends o'er her lute, with dark, unbraided hair ;
That maid of Zegri race, whose eye, whose mien,
Tell that despair her bosom's guest hath been.
So lost in thought she seems, the warrior's feet
Unheard approach her solitary seat,
Till his known accents every sense restore—
" My own loved Zayda ! do we meet once more ? "
She starts, she turns—the lightning of surprise,
Of sudden rapture, flashes from her eyes ;
But that is fleeting—it is past—and now
Far other meaning darkens o'er her brow ;
Changed is her aspect, and her tone severe—
" Hence, Aben-Zurrah ! death surrounds thee here ! "

"Zayda! what means that glance, unlike thine own?
What mean those words, and that unwonted tone?
I will not deem thee changed—but in thy face
It is not joy, it is not love, I trace!
It was not thus in other days we met:
Hath time, hath absence, taught thee to forget?
Oh! speak once more—these rising doubts dispel;
One smile of tenderness, and all is well!"

"Not thus we met in other days!—oh, no!
Thou wert not, warrior, then thy country's foe!
Those days are past—we ne'er shall meet again
With hearts all warmth, all confidence, as then.
But *thy* dark soul no gentler feelings sway,
Leader of hostile bands! away, away!
On in thy path of triumph and of power,
Nor pause to raise from earth a blighted flower."

"And *thou* too changed! thine early vow forgot!
This, this alone was wanting to my lot!
Exiled and scorned, of every tie bereft,
Thy love, the desert's lonely fount, was left;
And thou, my soul's last hope, its lingering beam,
Thou, the good angel of each brighter dream,
Wert all the barrenness of life possest,
To wake one soft affection in my breast!
That vision ended—fate hath naught in store
Of joy or sorrow e'er to touch me more.
Go, Zegri maid! to scenes of sunshine fly,
From the stern pupil of adversity!
And now to hope, to confidence, adieu!
If thou are faithless, who shall e'er be true?"

"Hamet! oh, wrong me not!—I too could speak
Of sorrows—trace them on my faded cheek,
In the sunk eye, and in the wasted form,
That tell the heart hath nursed a canker-worm!
But words were idle—read my sufferings there,
Where grief is stamped on all that once was fair.

"Oh, wert thou still what once I fondly deemed,
All that thy mien expressed, thy spirit seemed,
My love had been devotion—till in death
Thy name had trembled on my latest breath.
But not the chief who leads a lawless band,
To crush the altars of his native land;
The apostate son of heroes, whose disgrace
Hath stained the trophies of a glorious race;
Not *him* I loved—but one whose youthful name
Was pure and radiant in unsullied fame.
Hadst thou but died, ere yet dishonor's cloud
O'er that young name had gathered as a shroud,
I then had mourned thee proudly, and my grief
In its own loftiness had found relief;

A noble sorrow, cherished to the last,
When every meaner woe had long been past.
Yes ! let Affection weep—no common tear
She sheds, when bending o'er a hero's bier.
Let Nature mourn the dead—a grief like this,
To pangs that rend *my* bosom, had been bliss !"

"High-minded maid ! the time admits not now
To plead my cause, to vindicate my vow.
That vow, too dread, too solemn to recall,
Hath urged me onward, haply to my fall.
Yet this believe—no meaner aim inspires
My soul, no dream of poor ambition fires.
No ! every hope of power, of triumph, fled,
Behold me but the avenger of the dead !
One whose changed heart no tie, no kindred knows,
And in thy love alone hath sought repose.
Zayda ! wilt *thou* his stern accuser be ?
False to his country, he is true to thee !
Oh, hear me yet !—if Hamet e'er was dear,
By our first vows, our young affection, hear !
Soon must this fair and royal city fall,
Soon shall the cross be planted on her wall ;
Then who can tell what tides of blood may flow,
While her fanes echo to the shrieks of woe ?
Fly, fly with me, and let me bear thee far
From horrors thronging in the path of war :
Fly ! and repose in safety—till the blast
Hath made a desert in its course—and passed !"

"Thou that will triumph when the hour is come,
Hastened by thee, to seal thy country's doom,
With *thee* from scenes of death shall Zayda fly
To peace and safety ?—Woman, too, can die !
And die exulting, though unknown to fame,
In all the stainless beauty of her name !
Be mine, unmurmuring, undismayed, to share
The fate my kindred and my sire must bear.
And deem thou not my feeble heart shall fail,
When the clouds gather and the blasts assail.
Thou hast but known me ere the trying hour
Called into life my spirit's latent power ;
But I have energies that idly slept,
While withering o'er my silent woes I wept ;
And now, when hope and happiness are fled,
My soul is firm—for what remains to dread !
Who shall have power to suffer and to bear,
If strength and courage dwell not with Despair ?

Hamet, farewell—retrace thy path again,
To join thy brethren on the tented plain.
There wave and wood, in mingling murmurs, tell
How, in far other cause, thy fathers fell !

Yes ! on that soil hath Glory's footstep been,
Names unforgotten consecrate the scene !
Dwell not the souls of heroes round thee there,
Whose voices call thee in the whispering air ?
Unheard, in vain, they call—their fallen son
Hath stained the name those mighty spirits won,
And to the hatred of the brave and free
Bequeathed his own, through ages yet to be !

Still as she spoke, the enthusiast's kindling eye
Was lighted up with inborn majesty,
While her fair form and youthful features caught
All the proud grandeur of heroic thought,
Severely beauteous ; awe-struck and amazed,
In silent trance a while the warrior gazed,
As on some lofty vision—for she seemed
One all inspired—each look with glory beamed,
While, brightly bursting through its cloud of woes,
Her soul at once in all its light arose.
Oh ! ne'er had Hamet deemed there dwelt enshrined
In form so fragile that unconquered mind ;
And fixed, as by some high enchantment, there
He stood—till wonder yielded to despair.

" The dream is vanished—daughter of my foes !
Reft of each hope, the lonely wanderer goes.
Thy words have pierced his soul—yet deem thou not
Thou couldst be once adored, and e'er forgot !
Oh, formed for happier love, heroic maid !
In grief sublime, in danger undismayed,
Farewell, and be thou blest !—all words were vain
From him who ne'er may view that form again ;
Him, whose sole thought resembling bliss must be,
He *hath* been loved, once fondly loved, by thee ! "
And is the warrior gone ?—doth Zayda hear
His parting footstep, and without a tear ?
Thou weepest not, lofty maid !—yet who can tell
What secret pangs within thy heart may dwell ?
They feel not least, the firm, the high in soul,
Who best each feeling's agony control.
Yes, we may judge the measure of the grief
Which finds in Misery's eloquence relief ;
But who shall pierce those depths of silent woe
Whence breathes no language, whence no tears may flow ?
The pangs that many a noble breast hath proved,
Scorning itself that thus it *could* be moved ?
He, He alone, the inmost heart who knows,
Views all its weakness, pities all its throes,
He who hath mercy when mankind contemn,
Beholding anguish—all unknown to them.

Fair city ! thou that midst thy stately fanes
And gilded minarets, towering o'er the plains,

In Eastern grandeur proudly dost arise
Beneath thy canopy of deep-blue skies ;
While streams that bear thee treasures in their wave,
Thy citron-groves and myrtle-gardens lave :
Mourn, for thy doom is fixed—the days of fear,
Of chains, of wrath, of bitterness, are near ?
Within, around thee, are the trophied graves
Of kings and chiefs—their children shall be slaves.
Fair are thy halls, thy domes majestic swell,
But there a race that reared them not shall dwell ;
For midst thy councils Discord still presides,
Degenerate fear thy wavering monarch guides—
Last of a line whose regal spirit flown
Hath to their offspring but bequeathed a throne,
Without one generous thought, or feeling high,
To teach his soul how kings should live and die.

A voice resounds within Granada's wall,
The hearts of warriors echo to its call.
Whose are those tones, with power electric fraught,
To reach the source of pure exalted thought !

See, on a fortress tower, with beckoning hand,
A form, majestic as a prophet, stand !
His mien is all impassioned—and his eye
Filled with a light whose fountain is on high ;
Wild on the gale his silvery tresses flow,
And inspiration beams upon his brow ;
While, thronging round him, breathless thousands gaze
As on some mighty seer of elder days.

" Saw ye the banners of Castile displayed,
The helmets glittering, and the line arrayed ?
Heard ye the march of steel-clad hosts ? " he cries ;
" Children of conquerors ! in your strength arise !
O high-born tribes ! O names unstained by fear !
Azarques, Zegris, Almoradis, hear !
Be every feud forgotten, and your hands
Dyed with no blood but that of hostile bands.
Wake, princes of the land ! the hour is come,
And the red sabre must decide your doom.
Where is that spirit which prevailed of yore,
When Tarik's bands o'erspread the western shore ?
When the long combat raged on Xeres' plain,
And Afric's tecbir swelled through yielding Spain ?
Is the lance broken, is the shield decayed,
The warrior's arm unstrung, his heart dismayed ?
Shall no high spirit of ascendant worth
Arise to lead the sons of Islam forth ?
To guard the regions where our fathers' blood
Hath bathed each plain, and mingled with each flood ;
Where long their dust hath blended with the soil
Won by their swords, made fertile by their toil !

"O ye sierras of eternal snow!
Ye streams that by the tombs of heroes flow,
Woods, fountains, rocks of Spain! ye saw their might
In many a fierce and unforgotten fight—
Shall ye behold their lost, degenerate race,
Dwell 'midst your scenes in fetters and disgrace
With each memorial of the past around,
Each mighty monument of days renowned?
May this indignant heart ere then be cold,
This frame be gathered to its kindred mould!
And the last life-drop circling through my veins
Have tinged a soil untainted yet by chains!

"And yet one struggle ere our doom is sealed,
One mighty effort, one deciding field!
In vain each hope, we still have choice to be,
In life the fettered, or in death the free!"

Still while he speaks, each gallant heart beats high,
And ardor flashes from each kindling eye;
Youth, manhood, age, as if inspired, have caught
The glow of lofty hope and daring thought,
And all is hushed around—as every sense
Dwelt on the tones of that wild eloquence.

But when his voice hath ceased, the impetuous cry
Of eager thousands bursts at once on high;
Rampart, and rock, and fortress, ring around,
And fair Alhambra's inmost halls resound.
"Lead us, O chieftain! lead us to the strife,
To fame in death, or liberty in life!"
O zeal of noble hearts! in vain displayed!
Now, while the burning spirit of the brave
Is roused to energies that yet might save,
E'en now, enthusiasts! while ye rush to claim
Your glorious trial on the field of fame,
Your king hath yielded! Valor's dream is o'er;
Power, wealth, and freedom, are your own no more;
And for your children's portion, *but* remains
That bitter heritage—the stranger's chains.

CANTO III.

"Fermossi al fin il cor che balzò tanto.
HIPPOLITO PINDEMONTE.

HEROES of elder days! untaught to yield,
Who bled for Spain on many an ancient field;
Ye, that around the oaken cross of yore
Stood firm and fearless on Asturia's shore,
And with your spirit, ne'er to be subdued,
Hallowed the wild Cantabrian solitude;
Rejoice amidst your dwellings of repose,
In the last chastening of your Moslem foes!

Rejoice !—for Spain, arising in her strength,
Hath burst the remnant of their yoke at length,
And they, in turn, the cup of woe must drain,
And bathe their fetters with their tears in vain.
And thou, the warrior *born in happy hour*,
Valencia's lord, whose name alone was power,
Theme of a thousand songs in days gone by,
Conqueror of kings ! exult, O Cid ! on high.
For still 'twas thine to guard thy country's weal,
In life, in death, the watcher for Castile !

Thou, in that hour when Mauritania's bands
Rushed from their palmy groves and burning lands,
E'en in the realm of spirits didst retain
A patriot's vigilance, remembering Spain !
Then, at deep midnight, rose the mighty sound,
By Leon heard, in shuddering awe profound,
As through her echoing streets, in dread array,
Beings, once mortal, held their viewless way :
Voices from worlds we know not—and the tread
Of marching hosts, the armies of the dead,
Thou and thy buried chieftains—from the grave
Then did thy summons rouse a king to save,
And join thy warriors with unearthly might
To aid the rescue in Tolosa's fight.
Those days are past—the crescent on thy shore,
O realm of evening ! sets, to rise no more.
What banner streams afar from Vela's tower ?
The cross, bright ensign of Iberia's power !
What the glad shout of each exulting voice ?
Castile and Aragon ! rejoice, rejoice !
Yielding free entrance to victorious foes,
The Moorish city sees her gates unclose,
And Spain's proud host, with pennon, shield, and lance,
Through her long streets in knightly garb advance.

Oh ! ne'er in lofty dreams hath Fancy's eye
Dwelt on a scene of statelier pageantry,
At joust or tourney, theme of poet's lore,
High masque, or solemn festival of yore.
The gilded cupolas, that proudly rise
O'erarched by cloudless and cerulean skies ;
Tall minarets, shining mosques, barbaric towers,
Fountains, and palaces, and cypress bowers :
And they, the splendid and triumphant throng,
With helmets glittering as they move along
With broidered scarf, and gem-bestudded mail,
And graceful plumage streaming on the gale ;
Shields, gold-embossed, and pennons floating far,
And all the gorgeous blazonry of war,
All brightened by the rich transparent hues
That southern suns o'er heaven and earth diffuse ;
Blend in one scene of glory, formed to throw
O'er memory's page a never-fading glow.

And there, too, foremost 'midst the conquering brave,
Your azure-plumes, O Aben-Zurrahs ! wave.
There Hamet moves ; the chief whose lofty port
Seems nor reproach to shun, nor praise to court ;
Calm, stern, collected—yet within his breast
Is there no pang, no struggle, unconfessed ?
If such there be, it still must dwell unseen,
Nor cloud a triumph with a sufferer's mien.

Hear'st thou the solemn yet exulting sound
Of the deep anthem floating far around ?
The choral voices, to the skies that raise
The full majestic harmony of praise ?
Lo ! where, surrounded by their princely train,
They come, the sovereigns of rejoicing Spain,
Borne on their trophied car—lo ! bursting thence
A blaze of chivalrous magnificence !

Onward their slow and stately course they bend
To where the Alhambra's ancient towers ascend,
Reared and adorned by Moorish kings of yore,
Whose lost descendants there shall dwell no more.

They reached those towers—irregularly vast
And rude they seem, in mould barbaric cast :
They enter—to their wondering sight is given
A genii palace—an Arabian heaven !
A scene by magic raised, so strange, so fair,
Its forms and color seem alike of air.
Here, by sweet orange-boughs, half shaded o'er,
The deep clear bath reveals its marble floor,
Its margin fringed with flowers, whose glowing hues
The calm transparence of its wave suffuse.
There, round the court, where Moorish arches bend,
Aërial columns, richly decked, ascend ;
Unlike the models of each classic race,
Of Doric grandeur, or Corinthian grace,
But answering well each vision that portrays
Arabian splendor to the poet's gaze :
Wild, wondrous, brilliant, all—a mingling glow
Of rainbow-tints, above, around, below ;
Bright streaming from the many-tinctured veins
Of precious marble, and the vivid stains
Of rich mosaics o'er the light arcade,
In gay festoons and fairy knots displayed.
On through the enchanted realm, that only seems
Meet for the radiant creatures of our dreams,
The royal conquerors pass—while still their sight
On some new wonder dwells with fresh delight.
Here the eye roves through slender colonnades,
O'er bowery terraces and myrtle shades ;
Dark olive-woods beyond, and far on high
The vast sierra mingling with the sky.

There, scattering far around their diamond spray,
Clear streams from founts of alabaster play,
Through pillared halls, where exquisitely wrought,
Rich arabesques, with glittering foliage fraught,
Surmount each fretted arch, and lend the scene
A wild romantic, Oriental mien :
While many a verse, from Eastern bards of old,
Borders the walls in characters of gold.
Here Moslem luxury, in her own domain,
Hath held for ages her voluptuous reign
'Midst gorgeous domes, where soon shall silence brood
And all be lone—a splendid solitude.
Now wake their echoes to a thousand songs,
From mingling voices of exulting throngs ;
Tambour, and flute, and atabal, are there,
And joyous clarions pealings on the air ;
While every hall resounds, "Granada won !
Granada ! for Castile and Aragon !"

'Tis night—from dome and tower, in dazzling maze
The festal lamps innumerably blaze ;
Through long arcades the quivering lustre gleams
From every lattice tremulously streams,
'Midst orange-gardens plays on fount and rill,
And gilds the waves of Darro and Xenil :
Red flame the torches on each minaret's height,
And shines each street an avenue of light ;
And midnight feasts are held, and music's voice
Through the long night still summons to rejoice.

Yet there, while all would seem to heedless eye
One blaze of pomp, one burst of revelry,
Are hearts unsoothed by those delusive hours,
Galled by the chain, though decked awhile with flowers ;
Stern passions working in the indignant breast,
Deep pangs untold, high feelings unexpressed,
Heroic spirits, unsubmitting yet—
Vengeance, and keen remorse, and vain regret.

From yon proud height, whose olive-shaded brow
Commands the wide, luxuriant plains below,
Who lingering gazes o'er the lovely scene,
Anguish and shame contending in his mien ?
He, who, of heroes and of kings the son,
Hath lived to lose whate'er his fathers won ;
Whose doubts and fears his people's fate have sealed,
Wavering alike in council and in field ;
Weak, timid ruler of the wise and brave,
Still a fierce tyrant or a yielding slave.

Far from these vine-clad hills and azure skies,
To Afric's wilds the royal exile flies ;
Yet pauses on his way, to weep in vain
O'er all he never must behold again.

Fair spreads the scene around—for him *too* fair,
Each glowing charm but deepens his despair.
The Vega's meads, the city's glittering spires,
The old majestic palace of his sires,
The gay pavilions, and retired alcoves,
Bosomed in citron and pomegranate groves ;
Tower-crested rocks, and streams that wind in light,
All in one moment bursting on his sight,
Speak to his soul of glory's vanished years,
And wake the source of unavailing tears.
—Weepest thou, Abdallah ?—Thou dost well to weep,
O feeble heart ! o'er all thou couldst not keep !
Well do a woman's tears befit the eye
Of him who knew not, as a man, to die.

The gale sighs mournfully through Zayda's bower,
The hand is gone that nursed each infant flower.
No voice, no step, is in her father's halls,
Mute are the echoes of their marble walls ;
No stranger enters at the chieftain's gate,
But all is hushed, and void, and desolate.

There, through each tower and solitary shade,
In vain doth Hamet seek the Zagri maid :
Her grove is silent, her pavilion lone,
Her lute forsaken, and her doom unknown ;
And through the scenes she loved, unheeded flows
The stream whose music lulled her to repose.

But oh ! to him, whose self-accusing thought
Whispers, 'twas *he* that desolation wrought—
He, who his country and his faith betrayed,
And lent Castile revengeful, powerful aid—
A voice of sorrow swells in every gale,
Each wave, low rippling, tells a mournful tale,
And as the shrubs, untended, unconfined,
In wild exuberance rustle to the wind ;
Each leaf hath language to his startled sense,
And seems to murmur, "Thou hast driven her hence!"
And well he feels to trace her flight were vain,
—Where hath lost love been once recalled again ?
In her pure breast, so long by anguish torn,
His name can rouse no feeling now but scorn.
O bitter hour ! when first the shuddering heart
Wakes to behold the void within—and start !
To feel its own abandonment, and brood
O'er the chill bosom's depth of solitude :
The stormy passions that in Hamet's breast
Have swayed so long, so fiercely, are at rest ;
The avenger's task is closed :—he finds, too late
It hath not changed his feelings, but his fate.
His was a lofty spirit, turned aside
From its bright path by woes, and wrongs, and pride,

And onward, in its new tumultuous course,
Borne with too rapid and intense a force
To pause one moment in the dread career,
And ask—if such could be its native sphere?
Now are those days of wild delirium o'er,
Their fears and hopes excite his soul no more;
The feverish energies of passion close,
And his heart sinks in desolate respose,
Turns sickening from the world, yet shrinks not less
From its own deep and utter loneliness.

There is a sound of voices on the air,
A flash of armor to the sunbeam's glare,
'Midst the wild Alpuxarras;—there, on high,
Where mountain-snows are mingling with the sky,
A few brave tribes, with spirit yet unbroke,
Have fled indignant from the Spaniard's yoke.

O ye dread scenes! where Nature dwells alone,
Severely glorious on her craggy throne;
Ye citadels of rock, gigantic forms,
Veiled by the mist, and girdled by the storms,—
Ravines, and glens, and deep resounding caves,
That hold communion with the torrent-waves;
And ye, the unstained and everlasting snows,
That dwell above in bright and still repose;
To you, in every clime, in every age,
Far from the tyrant's or the conqueror's rage,
Hath Freedom led her sons—untired to keep
Her fearless vigils on the barren steep.
She, like the mountain eagle, still delights
To gaze exulting from unconquered heights,
And build her eyrie in defiance proud,
To dare the wind, and mingle with the cloud.

Now her deep voice, the soul's awakener, swells,
Wild Alpuxarras, through your inmost dells.
There, the dark glens and lonely rocks among,
As at the clarion's call, her children throng.
She with enduring strength had nerved each frame,
And made each heart the temple of her flame,
Her own resisting spirit, which shall glow
Unquenchably, surviving all below.

There high-born maids, that moved upon the earth
More like bright creatures of aerial birth,
Nurslings of palaces, have fled to share
The fate of brothers and of sires; to bear
All undismayed, privation and distress,
And smile the roses of the wilderness:
And mothers with their infants, there to dwell
In the deep forest or the cavern cell,
And rear their offspring 'midst the rocks, to be,
If now no more the mighty, still the free.

And 'midst that band are veterans, o'er whose head
Sorrows and years their mingled snow have shed !
They saw thy glory, they have wept thy fall,
O royal city and the wreck of all
They loved and hallowed most :—doth aught remain
For these to prove of happiness or pain ?
Life's cup is drained—earth fades before their eye :
Their task is closing—they have but to die.
Ask ye, why fled they hither ?—that their doom
Might be, to sink unfettered to the tomb.
And youth, in all its pride of strength, is there,
And buoyancy of spirit, formed to dare
And suffer all things—fallen on evil days,
Yet darting o'er the world an ardent gaze,
As on the arena where its powers may find
Full scope to strive for glory with mankind.
Such are the tenants of the mountain-hold,
The high in heart, unconquered, uncontrolled :
By day, the huntsmen of the wild—by night,
Unwearied guardians of the watch-fire's light,
They from their bleak majestic home have caught
A sterner tone of unsubmitting thought,
While all around them bids the soul arise
To blend with Nature's dread sublimities.
—But these are lofty dreams, and must not be
Where tyranny is near :—the bended knee,
The eye whose glance no inborn grandeur fires,
And the tamed heart, are tributes she requires ;
Nor must the dwellers of the rock look down
On regal conquerors, and defy their frown.
What warrior-band is toiling to explore
The mountain-pass, with pine-wood shadowed o'er,
Startling with martial sounds each rude recess,
Where the deep echo slept in loneliness !
These are the sons of Spain !—Your foes are near,
O exiles of the wild sierra ! hear !
Hear ! wake ! arise ! and from your inmost caves
Pour like the torrent in its might of waves !

Who leads the invaders on ?—his features bear
The deep-worn traces of a calm despair ;
Yet his dark brow is haughty—and his eye
Speaks of a soul that asks not sympathy.
'Tis he ! 'tis he again ! the apostate chief ;
He comes in all the sternness of his grief.
He comes, but changed in heart, no more to wield
Falchion for proud Castile in battle-field,
Against his country's children—though he leads
Castilian bands again to hostile deeds :
His hope is but from ceaseless pangs to fly,
To rush upon the Moslem spears, and die.
So shall remorse and love the heart release,
Which dares not dream of joy, but sighs for peace.

The mountain echoes are awake—a sound
Of strife is ringing through the rocks around.
Within the steep defile that winds between
Cliffs piled on cliffs, a dark, terrific scene,
Where Moorish exile and Castilian knight
Are wildly mingling in the serried fight.
Red flows the foaming streamlet of the glen,
Whose bright transparence ne'er was stained till then!
While swell the war-note and the clash of spears
To the bleak dwellings of the mountaineers,
Where thy sad daughters, lost Granada! wait,
In dread suspense, the tidings of their fate.
But he—whose spirit, panting for its rest,
Would fain each sword concentrate in his breast—
Who, where a spear is pointed, or a lance
Aimed at another's breast, would still advance—
Courts death in vain; each weapon glances by,
As if for him 'twere bliss too great to die.
Yes, Aben-Zurrah! there are deeper woes
Reserved for thee ere Nature's last repose;
Thou knowest not yet what vengeance fate can wreak,
Nor all the heart can suffer ere it break.
Doubtful and long the strife, and bravely fell
The sons of battle in that narrow dell;
Youth in its light of beauty there hath past,
And age, the weary, found repose at last;
Till, few and faint, the Moslem tribes recoil,
Borne down by numbers, and o'erpowered by toil.
Dispersed, disheartened, through the pass they fly,
Pierce the deep wood, or mount the cliff on high;
While Hamet's band in wonder gaze, nor dare
Track o'er their dizzy path the footsteps of despair.

Yet he, to whom each danger hath become
A dark delight, and every wild a home,
Still urges onward—undismayed to tread
Where life's fond lovers would recoil with dread.
But fear is for the happy—*they* may shrink
From the steep precipice, or torrent's brink;
They to whom earth is paradise—their doom
Lends no stern courage to approach the tomb:
Not such his lot, who schooled by fate severe,
Were but too blest if aught remained to fear.
Up the rude crags, whose giant masses throw
Eternal shadows o'er the glen below;
And by the fall, whose many-tinctured spray
Half in a mist of radiance veils its way,
He holds his venturous track:—supported now
By some o'erhanging pine or ilex bough;
Now by some jutting stone, that seems to dwell
Half in mid-air, as balanced by a spell.
Now hath his footstep gained the summit's head,
A level span, with emerald verdure spread,
A fairy circle—there the heath-flowers rise,

And the rock-rose unnoticed blooms and dies ;
And brightly plays the stream, ere yet its tide
In foam and thunder cleave the mountain-side.
But all is wild beyond—and Hamet's eye
Roves o'er a world of rude sublimity.
That dell beneath, where e'en at noon of day
Earth's chartered guest, the sunbeam, scarce can stray ;
Around, untrodden woods ; and far above,
Where mortal footstep ne'er may hope to rove,
Bare granite cliffs, whose fixed, inherent dyes
Rival the tints that float o'er summer skies ;
And the pure glittering snow-realm, yet more high,
That seems a part of Heaven's eternity.

There is no track of man where Hamet stands,
Pathless the scene as Lybia's desert sands;
Yet on the calm still air a sound is heard
Of distant voices, and the gathering-word
Of Islam's tribes, now faint and fainter grown,
Now but the lingering echo of a tone.

That sound, whose cadence dies upon his ear
He follows, reckless if his bands are near.
On by the rushing stream his way he bends,
And through the mountain's forest zone ascends;
Piercing the still and solitary shades
Of ancient pine, and dark luxuriant glades,
Eternal twilight's reign :—those mazes past,
The glowing sunbeams meet his eyes at last,
And the lone wanderer now hath reached the source
Whence the wave gushes, foaming on its course.
But there he pauses—for the lonely scene
Towers in such dread magnificence of mien,
And, mingled oft with some wild eagle's cry,
From rock-built eyrie rushing to the sky,
So deep the solemn and majestic sound
Of forests, and of waters murmuring round—
That, rapt in wondering awe, his heart forgets
Its fleeting struggles and its vain regrets.
—What earthly feeling unabashed can dwell
In Nature's mighty presence ?—'midst the swell
Of everlasting hills, the roar of floods,
And frown of rocks, and pomp of waving woods?
These their own grandeur on the soul impress,
And bid each passion feel its nothingness.

'Midst the vast marble cliffs, a lofty cave
Rears its broad arch beside the rushing wave ;
Shadowed by giant oaks, and rude and lone,
It seems the temple of some power unknown,
Where earthly being may not dare intrude
To pierce the secrets of the solitude.
Yet thence at intervals a voice of wail
Is rising, wild and solemn, on the gale.

Did thy heart thrill, O Hamet! at the tone?
Came it not o'er thee as a spirit's moan?
As some loved sound, that long from earth had fled,
The unforgotten accents of the dead?
E'en thus it rose—and springing from his trance
His eager footsteps to the sound advance.
He mounts the cliffs, he gains the cavern floor;
Its dark green moss with blood is sprinkled o'er:
He rushes on—and lo! where Zayda rends
Her locks, as o'er her slaughtered sire she bends
Lost in despair;—yet, as a step draws nigh,
Disturbing sorrow's lonely sanctity,
She lifts her head, and, all-subdued by grief,
Views with a wild sad smile the once-loved chief;
While rove her thoughts, unconscious of the past,
And every woe forgetting—but the last.

"Comest thou to weep with me?—for am I left
Alone on earth, of every tie bereft.
Low lies the warrior on his blood-stained bier;
His child may call, but he no more shall hear.
He sleeps—but never shall those eyes unclose;
'Twas not my voice that lulled him to repose;
Nor can it break his slumbers.—Dost thou mourn?
And is thy heart, like mine, with anguish torn?
Weep, and my soul a joy of grief shall know,
That o'er his grave my tears with Hamet's flow!"

But scarce her voice had breathed that well-known name
When, swiftly rushing o'er her spirit, came
Each dark remembrance—by affliction's power
Awhile effaced in that o'erwhelming hour,
To wake with tenfold strength: 'twas then her eye
Resumed its light, her mien its majesty,
And o'er her wasted cheek a burning glow
Spreads, while her lips' indignant accents flow.

"Away! I dream! Oh, how hath sorrow's might
Bowed down my soul, and quenched its native light—
That I should thus forget! and bid *thy* tear
With mine be mingled o'er a father's bier!
Did he not perish, haply by thy hand,
In the last combat with thy ruthless band?
The morn beheld that conflict of despair:—
'Twas then he fell—he fell!—and thou wert there—
Thou! who thy country's children hast pursued
To their last refuge 'midst these mountains rude.
Was it for this I loved thee?—Thou hast taught
My soul all grief, all bitterness of thought!
'Twill soon be past—I bow to heaven's decree,
Which bade each pang be ministered by thee."

"I had not deemed that aught remained below
For me to prove of yet untasted woe;

But thus to meet thee, Zayda ! can impart
One more, one keener agony of heart.
Oh, hear me yet !—I would have died to save
My foe, but still thy father, from the grave,
But, in the fierce confusion of the strife,
In my own stern despair and scorn of life,
Borne wildly on, I saw not, knew not aught,
Save that to perish there in vain I sought.
And let me share thy sorrows !—hadst thou known
All I have felt in silence and alone,
E'en *thou* mightst then relent, and deem, at last,
A grief like mine might expiate all the past.

"But oh ! for thee, the loved and precious flower,
So fondly reared in luxury's guarded bower,
From every danger, every storm secured,
How hast *thou* suffered ! what hast thou endured !
Daughter of palaces ! and can it be
That this bleak desert is a home for thee !
These rocks *thy* dwelling ! thou, who shouldst have known
Of life the sunbeam and the smile alone !
Oh, yet forgive ! be all my guilt forgot,
Nor bid me leave thee to so rude a lot !"
"That lot is fixed ; 'twere fruitless to repine
Still must a gulf divide my fate from thine.
I may forgive—but not at will the heart
Can bid its dark remembrances depart.
No, Hamet, no !—too deeply are these traced,
Yet the hour comes when all shall be effaced !
Not long on earth, not long, shall Zayda keep
Her lonely vigils o'er the grave to weep :
E'en now, prophetic of my early doom,
Speaks to my soul a presage of the tomb ;
And ne'er in vain did hopeless mourner feel
That deep foreboding o'er the bosom steal !
Soon shall I slumber calmly by the side
Of him for whom I lived, and would have died ;
Till then, one thought shall soothe my orphan lot,
In pain and peril—I forsook him not.

"And now, farewell !—behold the summer-day
Is passing, like the dreams of life, away.
Soon will the tribe of him who sleeps draw nigh,
With the last rites his bier to sanctify.
Oh, yet in time, away ! 'twere not *my* prayer
Could move their hearts a foe like thee to spare !
This hour they come—and dost thou scorn to fly ?
Save me that one last pang—to see thee die !"
E'en while she speaks is heard their echoing tread ;
Onward they move, the kindred of the dead.
They reach the cave—they enter—slow their pace,
And calm, deep sadness marks each mourner's face
And all is hushed, till he who seems to wait
In silent, stern devotedness, his fate,

Hath met their glance—then grief to fury turns ;
Each mien is changed, each eye indignant burns ;
And voices rise, and swords have left their sheath,
Blood must atone for blood and death for death !
They close around him : lofty still his mien,
His cheek unaltered, and his brow serene.
Unheard, or heard in vain, is Zayda's cry :
Fruitless her prayer, unmarked her agony.
But as his foremost foes their weapons bend
Against the life he seeks not to defend,
Wildly she darts between—each feeling past,
Save strong affection, which prevails at last.
Oh, not in vain its daring !—for the blow
Aimed at his heart hath bade her life-blood flow ;
And she hath sunk a martyr on the breast,
Where, in that hour, her head may calmly rest,
For he is saved ! Behold the Zegri band,
Pale with dismay and grief, around her stand :
While, every thought of hate and vengeance o'er,
They weep for her who soon shall weep no more.
She, she alone is calm :—a fading smile,
Like sunset, passes o'er her cheek the while ;
And in her eye, ere yet it closes, dwell
Those last faint rays, the parting soul's farewell.

" Now is the conflict past, and I have proved
How well, how deeply thou hast been beloved !
Yes ! in an hour like this 'twere vain to hide
The heart so long and so severely tried :
Still to thy name that heart hath fondly thrilled,
But sterner duties called—and were fulfilled :
And I am blest !—To every holier tie
My life was faithful,—and for thee I die !
Nor shall the love so purified be vain ;
Severed on earth, we yet shall meet again.
Farewell !—And ye, at Zayda's dying prayer,
Spare him, my kindred tribe ! forgive and spare !
Oh ! be his guilt forgotten in his woes,
While I, beside my sire, in peace repose."

Now fades her cheek, her voice hath sunk, and death
Sits in her eye, and struggles in her breath.
One pang—'tis past—her task on earth is done,
And the pure spirit to its rest hath flown.
But he for whom she died—Oh ! who may paint
The grief, to which all other woes were faint ?
There is no power in language to impart
The deeper pangs, the ordeals of the heart,
By the dread Searcher of the soul surveyed ;
These have no words—nor are by words portrayed.

A dirge is rising on the mountain-air,
Whose fitful swells its plaintive murmurs bear

Far o'er the Alpuxarras ; wild its tone,
And rocks and caverns echo, " Thou art gone !"

Daughter of heroes ! thou art gone
To share his tomb who gave thee birth ;
Peace to the lovely spirit flown !
It was not formed for earth.
Thou wert a sunbeam in thy race,
Which brightly passed, and left no trace.

But calmly sleep !—for thou art free,
And hands unchained thy tomb shall raise.
Sleep ! they are closed at length for thee,
Life's few and evil days !
Nor shalt thou watch, with tearful eye,
The lingering death of liberty.

Flower of the desert ! thou thy bloom
Didst early to the storm resign :
We bear it still—and dark *their* doom
Who cannot weep for thine !
For us, whose every hope is fled,
The time is past to mourn the dead.

The days have been when o'er thy bier
Far other strains than these had flowed ;
Now, as a home from grief and fear,
We hail thy dark abode !
We, who but linger to bequeath
Our sons the choice of chains or death.

Thou art with those, the free, the brave,
The mighty of departed years ;
And for the slumberers of the grave
Our fate hath left no tears.
Though loved and lost, to weep were vain
For thee, who ne'er shalt weep again.

Have we not seen, despoiled by foes,
The land our fathers won of yore ?
And is there yet a pang for those
Who gaze on *this* no more ?
Oh, that like them 'twere ours to rest !
Daughter of heroes ! thou art blest !

A few short years, and in the lonely cave
Where sleeps the Zegri maid, is Hamet's grave.
Severed in life, united in the tomb—
Such, of the hearts that loved so well, the doom !
Their dirge, of woods and waves the eternal moan ;
Their sepulchre, the pine-clad rocks alone.
And oft beside the midnight watch-fire's blaze,
Amidst those rocks, in long departed days

(When freedom fled, to hold, sequestered there,
The stern and lofty councils of despair),
Some exiled Moor, a warrior of the wild,
Who the lone hours with mournful strains beguiled,
Hath taught his mountain-home the tale of those
Who thus have suffered, and who thus repose.

THE WIDOW OF CRESCENTIUS.

In the reign of Otho III., Emperor of Germany, the Romans, excited by their Consul, Crescentius, who ardently desired to restore the ancient glory of the Republic, made a bold attempt to shake off the Saxon yoke, and the authority of the Popes, whose vices rendered them objects of universal contempt. The Consul was besieged by Otho in the Mole of Hadrian, which long afterwards continued to be called the Tower of Crescentius. Otho, after many unavailing attacks upon this fortress, at last entered into negotiations; and, pledging his imperial word to respect the life of Crescentius, and the rights of the Roman citizens, the unfortunate leader was betrayed into his power, and immediately beheaded, with many of his partisans. Stephania, his widow, concealing her affliction and her resentment for the insults to which she had been exposed, secretly resolved to revenge her husband and herself. On the return of Otho from a pilgrimage to Mount Gargano, which, perhaps, a feeling of remorse had induced him to undertake, she found means to be introduced to him, and to gain his confidence; and a poison administered by her was soon afterwards the cause of his painful death."—See SISMONDI, *History of the Italian Republics*, vol. i.

"L'orage peut briser un moment les fleurs qui tiennent encore la tête levée."
MAD. DE STAEL.

'MIDST Tivoli's luxuriant glades,
Bright-foaming falls, and olive shades,
Where dwelt, in days departed long,
The sons of battle and of song,
No tree, no shrub its foliage rears,
But o'er the wrecks of other years,
Temples and domes, which long have been
The soil of that enchanted scene.

There the wild fig-tree and the vine
O'er Hadrian's mouldering villa twine;
The cypress, in funereal grace,
Usurps the vanished column's place;
O'er fallen shrine and ruined frieze
The wall-flower rustles in the breeze;
Acanthus-leaves the marble hide
They once adorned in sculptured pride;
And nature hath resumed her throne
O'er the vast works of ages flown.

Was it for this that many a pile,
Pride of Ilissus and of Nile,
To Anio's banks the image lent
Of each imperial monument?
Now Athens weeps her shattered fanes,
Thy temples, Egypt, strew thy plains;
And the proud fabrics Hadrian reared
From Tibur's vale have disappeared.
We need no prescient sibyl there
The doom of grandeur to declare;
Each stone, where weeds and ivy climb,
Reveals some oracle of Time;
Each relic utters Fate's decree,
The future as the past shall be.

Halls of the dead! in Tibur's vale,
Who now shall tell your lofty tale?
Who trace the high patrician's dome,
The bard's retreat, the hero's home?
When moss-clad wrecks alone record
There dwelt the world's departed lord
In scenes where verdure's rich array
Still sheds young beauty o'er decay,
And sunshine on each glowing hill,
'Midst ruins finds a dwelling still.

Sunk is thy palace—but thy tomb,
Hadrian! hath shared a prouder doom,
Though vanished with the days of old
Its pillars of Corinthian mould;
And the fair forms by sculpture wrought,
Each bodying some immortal thought,
Which o'er that temple of the dead,
Serene but solemn beauty shed,
Have found, like glory's self, a grave
In Time's abyss, or Tiber's wave:
Yet dreams more lofty and more fair
Than art's bold hand hath imaged e'er,
High thoughts of many a mighty mind,
Expanding when all else declined,
In twilight years, when only they
Recalled the radiance passed away
Have made that ancient pile their home,
Fortress of freedom and of Rome.

There he, who strove in evil days
Again to kindle glory's rays,
Whose spirit sought a path of light,
For those dim ages far too bright,—
Crescentius long maintained the strife
Which closed but with its martyr's life,
And left the imperial tomb a name,
A heritage of holier fame,
There closed De Brescia's mission high,
From thence the patriot came to die;
Aud thou, whose Roman soul the last
Spoke with the voice of ages past,
Whose thoughts so long from earth had fled,
To mingle with the glorious dead,
That 'midst the world's degenerate race
They vainly sought a dwelling-place.
Within that house of death didst brood
O'er visions to thy ruin wooed.
Yet, worthy of a brighter lot,
Rienzi, be thy faults forgot!
For thou, when all around thee lay
Chained in the slumbers of decay—
So sunk each heart, that mortal eye
Had scarce a *tear* for liberty—
Alone, amidst the darkness there,
Couldst gaze on Rome—yet not despair!

'Tis morn, and Nature's richest dyes
Are floating o'er Italian skies;
Tints of transparent lustre shine
Along the snow-clad Apennine;
The clouds have left Soracte's height,
And yellow Tiber winds in light,
Where tombs and fallen fanes have strewed
The wide Campagna's solitude,
Tis sad amidst that scene to trace
Those relics of a vanished race;
Yet o'er the ravaged path of time—
Such glory sheds that brilliant clime,

Where Nature still, though empires fall,
Holds her triumphant festival—
E'en Desolation wears a smile,
Where skies and sunbeams laugh the while;
And heaven's own light, earth's richest bloom.
Array the ruin and the tomb.

But she, who from yon convent tower
Breathes the pure freshness of the hour;
She, whose rich flow of raven hair
Streams wildly on the morning air,
Heeds not how fair the scene below,
Robed in Italia's brightest glow.
Though throned 'midst Latium's classic plains
The Eternal City's towers and fanes,
And they, the Pleiades of earth,
The seven proud hills of Empire's birth,
Lie spread beneath: not now her glance
Roves o'er that vast sublime expanse,
Inspired, and bright with hope, 'tis thrown
On Adrian's massy tomb alone:
There, from the storm, when Freedom fled,
His faithful few Crescentius led;
While she, his anxious bride, who now
Bends o'er the scene her youthful brow,
Sought refuge in the hallowed fane,
Which then could shelter, not in vain.

But now the lofty strife is o'er,
And liberty shall weep no more.
At length imperial Otho's voice
Bids her devoted sons rejoice;
And he, who battled to restore
The glories and the rights of yore,
Whose accents, like the clarion's sound,
Could burst the dead repose around,
Again his native Rome shall see,
The sceptred city of the free!
And young Stephania waits the hour
When leaves her lord his fortress tower.
Her ardent heart with joy elate,
That seems beyond the reach of fate;
Her mien, like creature from above,
All vivified with hope and love.

Fair is her form, and in her eye
Lives all the soul of Italy;
A meaning lofty and inspired,
As by her native day-star fired;
Such wild and high expression, fraught
With glances of impassioned thought,
As fancy sheds, in visions bright,
O'er priestess of the God of Light;
And the dark locks that lend her face
A youthful and luxuriant grace,
Wave o'er her cheek, whose kindling dyes
Seem from the fire within to rise,
But deepened by the burning heaven
To her own land of sunbeams given.
Italian art that fervid glow
Would o'er ideal beauty throw,
And with such ardent life express
Her high-wrought dreams of loveliness,—
Dreams which, surviving Empire's fall,
The shade of glory still recall.

But see!—the banner of the brave
O'er Adrian's tomb hath ceased to wave.
'Tis lowered—and now Stephania's eye
Can well the martial train descry,
Who, issuing from that ancient dome,
Pour through the crowded streets of Rome.
Now from her watch-tower on the height,
With step as fabled wood-nymph's light,

She flies—and swift her way pursues,
Through the lone convent's avenues.
Dark cypress groves, and fields o'erspread
With records of the conquering dead,
And paths which track a glowing waste,
She traverses in breathless haste ;
And by the tombs where dust is shrined,
Once tenanted by loftiest mind,
Still passing on, hath reached the gate
Of Rome, the proud, the desolate !
Thronged are the streets, and, still renewed,
Rush on the gathering multitude.

Is it their high-souled chief to greet,
That thus the Roman thousands meet ?
With names that bid their thoughts ascend,
Crescentius, thine in song to blend ;
And of triumphal days gone by
Recall the inspiring pageantry ?
—There is an air of breathless dread,
An eager glance, a hurrying tread ;
And now a fearful silence round,
And now a fitful murmuring sound,
'Midst the pale crowds, that almost seem
Phantoms of some tumultuous dream.
Quick is each step, and wild each mien,
Portentous of some awful scene.
Bride of Crescentius ! as the throng
Bore thee with whelming force along,
How did thine anxious heart beat high,
Till rose suspense to agony !—
Too brief suspense, that soon shall close,
And leave thy heart to deeper woes.

Who 'midst yon guarded precinct stands,
With fearless mien, but fettered hands ?
The minsters of death are nigh,
Yet a calm grandeur lights his eye ;
And in his glance there lives a mind
Which was not formed for chains to bind,
But cast in such heroic mould
As theirs, the ascendant ones of old.
Crescentius ! freedom's daring son,
Is this the guerdon thou hast won ?
O worthy to have lived and died
In the bright days of Latium's pride !
Thus must the beam of glory close
O'er the seven hills again that rose,
When at thy voice, to burst the yoke,
The soul of Rome indignant woke ?
Vain dream ! the sacred shields are gone,
Sunk is the crowning city's throne
The illusions, that around her cast
Their guardian spells, have long been past.
Thy life hath been a short-star's ray,
Shed o'er her midnight of decay ;
Thy death at freedom's ruined shrine
Must rivet every chain—but thine.

Calm is his aspect, and his eye
Now fixed upon the deep-blue sky,
Now on those wrecks of ages fled,
Around in desolation spread—
Arch, temple, column, worn and gray,
Recording triumphs passed away ;
Works of the mighty and the free,
Whose steps on earth no more shall be,
Though their bright course hath left a trace
Nor years nor sorrows can efface.
Why changes now the patriot's mien,
Erewhile so loftily serene ?
Thus can approaching death control
The might of that commanding soul ?
No !—Heard he not that thrilling cry
Which told of bitterest agony ?
He heard it, and at once, subdued,
Hath sunk the hero's fortitude.
He heard it, and his heart too well
Whence rose that voice of woe can tell ;

And 'midst the gazing throngs around
One well-known form his glance hath found—
One fondly loving and beloved,
In grief, in peril, faithful proved.
Yes, in the wildness of despair,
She, his devoted bride, is there.
Pale, breathless, through the crowd she flies,
The light of frenzy in her eyes :
But ere her arms can clasp the form,
Which life ere long must cease to warm,
Ere on his agonizing breast
Her heart can heave, her head can rest,
Checked in her course by ruthless hands,
Mute, motionless, at once she stands ;
With bloodless cheek and vacant glance,
Frozen and fixed in horror's trance ;
Spellbound, as every sense were fled,
And thought o'erwhelmed, and feeling dead.
And the light waving of her hair,
And veil, far floating on the air,
Alone, in that dread moment, show
She is no sculptured form of woe.

The scene of grief and death is o'er,
The patriot's heart shall throb no more :
But *hers*—so vainly formed to prove
The pure devotedness of love,
And draw from fond affection's eye
All thought sublime, all feeling high ;
When consciousness again shall wake,
Hath now no refuge—but to break.
The spirit long inured to pain
May smile at fate in calm disdain :
Survive its darkest hour and rise
In more majestic energies.
But in the glow of vernal pride,
If each warm hope *at once* hath died.
Then sinks the mind, a blighted flower,
Dead to the sunbeam and the shower,
A broken gem, whose inborn light
Is scattered—ne'er to reunite.

PART II.

Hast thou a scene that is not spread
With records of thy glory fled ?
A monument that doth not tell
The tale of liberty's farewell ?
Italia ! thou art but a grave
Where flowers luxuriate o'er the brave,
And nature gives her treasures birth
O'er all that hath been great on earth.
Yet smile thy heavens as once they smiled,
When thou wert freedom's favored child :
Though fane and tomb alike are low,
Time hath not dimmed thy sunbeam's glow ;
And, robed in that exulting ray,
Thou seem'st to triumph o'er decay.
Oh, yet, though by thy sorrows bent,
In nature's pomp magnificent ;
What marvel if, when all was lost,
Still on thy bright, enchanted coast,
Though many an omen warned him thence,
Lingered the lord of eloquence ?
Still gazing on the lovely sky,
Whose radiance wooed him—but to die :
Like him, *who* would not linger there
Where heaven, earth, ocean, all are fair ?
Who 'midst thy glowing scenes could dwell,
Nor bid awhile his griefs farewell ?
Hath not thy pure and genial air
Balm for all sadness but despair ?
No ! there are pangs, whose deep-worn trace
Not all *thy* magic can efface !
Hearts by unkindness wrung may learn
The world and all its gifts to spurn ;
Time may steal on with silent tread,
And dry the tear that mourns the dead,
May change fond love, subdue regret,
And teach e'en vengeance to forget :
But thou, Remorse ! there is no charm,
Thy sting, avenger, to disarm !

Vain are bright suns and laughing skies
To soothe thy victim's agonies ;
The heart once made thy burning throne,
Still, while it beats, is thine alone.

In vain for Otho's joyless eye
Smile the fair scenes of Italy,
As through her landscapes' rich array
The imperial pilgrim bends his way.
Thy form, Crescentius, on his sight
Rises when nature laughs in light,
Glides round him at the midnight hour,
Is present in his festal bower,
With awful voice and frowning mien,
By all but him unheard, unseen.
Oh ! thus to shadows of the grave
Be every tyrant still a slave !

Where through Gargano's woody dells,
O'er bending oaks the north wind swells,
A sainted hermit's lowly tomb
Is bosomed in umbrageous gloom,
In shades that saw him live and die
Beneath their waving canopy.
'Twas his, as legends tell, to share
The converse of immortals there ;
Around that dweller of the wild
There "bright appearances" have smiled,
And angel wings, at eve, have been
Gleaming the shadowy boughs between.
And oft from that secluded bower
Hath breathed, at midnight's calmer hour,
A swell of viewless harps, a sound
Of warbled anthems pealing round.
Oh, none but voices of the sky
Might wake that thrilling harmony,
Whose tones, whose very echoes made
An Eden of the lonely shade!
Years have gone by ; the hermit sleeps
Amidst Gargano's woods and steeps;
Ivy and flowers have half o'ergrown,
And veiled his low sepulchral stone;
Yet still the spot is holy, still
Celestial footsteps haunt the hill ;
And oft the awe-struck mountaineer
Aërial vesper-hymns may hear
Around those forest precincts float,
Soft, solemn, clear, but still remote.
Oft will Affliction breathe her plaint
To that rude shrine's departed saint,
And deem that spirits of the blest
There shed sweet influence o'er her breast.

And thither Otho now repairs,
To soothe his soul with vows and prayers ;
And if for him, on holy ground,
The lost one, Peace, may yet be found,
'Midst rocks and forests by the bed,
Where calmly sleep the sainted dead,
She dwells, remote from heedless eye,
With Nature's lonely majesty.

Vain, vain the search—his troubled breast
Nor vow nor penance lulls to rest ;
The weary pilgrimage is o'er,
The hopes that cheered it are no more.
Then sinks his soul, and day by day
Youth's buoyant energies decay.
The light of health his eye hath flown,
The glow that tinged his cheek is gone.
Joyless as one on whom is laid
Some baleful spell that bids him fade
Extending its mysterious power
O'er every scene, o'er every hour :
E'en thus *he* withers ; and to him
Italia's brilliant skies are dim.
He withers—in that glorious clime
Where Nature laughs in scorn of Time,
And suns, that shed on all below
Their full and vivifying glow,
From him alone their power withhold,
And leave his heart in darkness cold.

Earth blooms around him, heaven is fair,
He only seems to perish there.

Yet, sometimes will a transient smile
Play o'er his faded cheek awhile,
When breathes his minstrel boy a strain
Of power to lull all earthly pain ;
So wildly sweet, its notes might seem
The ethereal music of a dream,
A spirit's voice from worlds unknown,
Deep thrilling power in every tone !
Sweet is that lay, and yet its flow
Hath language only given to woe
And if at times its wakening swell
Some tale of glory seems to tell,
Soon the proud notes of triumph die,
Lost in a dirge's harmony.
Oh ! many a pang the heart hath proved,
Hath deeply suffered, fondly loved,
Ere the sad strain could catch from thence
Such deep impassioned eloquence!—
Yes ! gaze on him, that minstrel boy—
He is no child of hope and joy !
Though few his years, yet have they been
Such as leave traces on the mien,
And o'er the roses of our prime
Breathe other blights than those of time.

Yet seems his spirit wild and proud,
By grief unsoftened and unbowed.
Oh ! there are sorrows which impart
A sternness foreign to the heart,
And, rushing with an earthquake's power
That makes a desert in an hour,
Rouse the dread passions in their course
As tempests wake the billow's force !—
'Tis sad, on youthful Guido's face,
The stamp of woes like these to trace.
Oh ! where can ruins awe mankind,
Dark as the ruins of the mind ?

His mien is lofty, but his gaze
Too well a wandering soul betrays ;
His full dark eye at times is bright
With strange and momentary light,
Whose quick uncertain flashes throw
O'er his pale cheek a hectic glow :
And oft his features and his air
A shade of troubled mystery wear,
A glance of hurried wildness, fraught
With some unfathomable thought.
Whate'er that thought, still unexpressed,
Dwells that sad secret in his breast ;
The pride his haughty brow reveals,
All other passions well conceals—
He breathes each wounded feeling's tone
In music's eloquence alone ;
His soul's deep voice is only poured
Through his full song and swelling chord.
He seeks no friend, but shuns the train
Of courtiers with a proud disdain ;
And, save when Otho bids his lay
Its half unearthly power essay
In hall or bower the heart to thrill,
His haunts are wild and lonely still.
Far distant from the heedless throng,
He roves old Tiber's banks along,
Where Empire's desolate remains
Lie scattered o'er the silent plains ;
Or, lingering 'midst each ruined shrine
That strews the desert Palatine,
With mournful yet commanding mien,
Like the sad genius of the scene,
Entranced in awful thought appears
To commune with departed years.
Or at the dead of night, when Rome
Seems of heroic shades the home ;
When Tiber's murmuring voice recalls
The mighty to their ancient halls ;

When hushed is every meaner sound,
And the deep moonlight-calm around
Leaves to the solemn scene alone
The majesty of ages flown,—
A pilgrim to each hero's tomb
He wanders through the sacred gloom,
And, 'midst those dwellings of decay,
At times will breathe so sad a lay,
So wild a grandeur in each tone,
'Tis like a dirge for empires gone!

Awake thy pealing harp again,
But breathe a more exulting strain,
Young Guido! for awhile forgot
Be the dark secrets of thy lot,
And rouse the inspiring soul of song
To speed the banquet's hour along!
The feast is spread, the music's call
Is echoing through the royal hall,
And banners wave and trophies shine
O'er stately guests in glittering line;
And Otho seeks awhile to chase
The thoughts he never can erase,
And bid the voice, whose murmurs deep
Rise like a spirit on his sleep—
The still small voice of conscience—die,
Lost in the din of revelry.
On his pale brow dejection lowers,
But that shall yield to festal hours:
A gloom is in his faded eye,
But that from music's power shall fly:
His wasted cheek is wan with care,
But mirth shall spread fresh crimson there.
Wake, Guido! wake thy numbers high,
Strike the bold chord exultingly!
And pour upon the enraptured ear
Such strains as warriors love to hear!
Let the rich mantling goblet flow,
And banish all resembling woe;
And, if a thought intrude, of power
To mar the bright convivial hour,
Still must its influence lurk unseen,
And cloud the heart—but not the mien!

Away, vain dream!—on Otho's brow,
Still darker lower the shadows now;
Changed are his features, now o'erspread
With the cold paleness of the dead;
Now crimsoned with a hectic dye,
The burning flush of agony!
His lip is quivering, and his breast
Heaves with convulsive pangs oppressed;
Now his dim eye seems fixed and glazed,
And now to heaven in anguish raised;
And as, with unavailing aid,
Around him throng his guests dismayed,
He sinks—while scarce his struggling breath
Hath power to falter—"This is death!"

Then rushed that haughty child of song,
Dark Guido, through the awe-struck throng:
Filled with a strange delirious light,
His kindling eye shone wildly bright;
And on the sufferer's mien awhile
Gazing with stern vindictive smile,
A feverish glow of triumph dyed
His burning cheek, while thus he cried:—
"Yes! these are death-pangs—on thy brow
Is set the seal of vengeance now!
Oh! well was mixed the deadly draught,
And long and deeply hast thou quaffed,
And bitter as thy pangs may be,
They are but guerdons meet from me.
Yet, these are but a moment's throes,
Howe'er intense, they soon shall close.
Soon shalt thou yield thy fleeting breath—
My life hath been a lingering death;
Since one dark hour of woe and crime,
A blood-spot on the page of time!

"Deemest thou my mind of reason void?
It is not frenzied,—but destroyed!
Ay! view the wreck with shuddering thought,—
That work of ruin thou hast wrought!
The secret of thy doom to tell,
My name alone suffices well!
Stephania!—once a hero's bride!
Otho! thou knowest the rest—*he died.*
Yes! trusting to a monarch's word,
The Roman fell, untried, unheard!
And thou, whose every pledge was vain,
How couldst *thou* trust in aught again?

"He died, and I was changed—my soul,
A lonely wanderer, spurned control.
From peace, and light, and glory hurled,
The outcast of a purer world,
I saw each brighter hope o'erthrown,
And lived for one dread task alone.
The task is closed, fulfilled the vow—
The hand of death is on thee now.
Betrayer! in thy turn betrayed,
The debt of blood shall soon be paid!
Thine hour is come—the time hath been
My heart had shrunk from such a scene;
That feeling long is past—my fate
Hath made me stern as desolate.

"Ye that around me shuddering stand,
Ye chiefs and princes of the land!
Mourn ye a guilty monarch's doom?
Ye wept not o'er the patriot's tomb!
He sleeps unhonored—yet be mine
To share his low, neglected shrine
His soul with freedom finds a home,
His grave is that of glory—Rome!
Are not the great of old with her,
That city of the sepulchre?
Lead me to death! and let me share
The slumbers of the mighty there!"

The day departs—that fearful day
Fades in calm loveliness away:
From purple heavens its lingering beam
Seems melting into Tiber's stream,
And softly tints each Roman hill
With glowing light, as clear and still
As if, unstained by crime or woe,
Its hours had passed in silent flow.
The day sets calmly—it hath been
Marked with a strange and awful scene;
One guilty bosom throbs no more,
And Otho's pangs and life are o'er.
And thou, ere yet another sun
His burning race hath brightly run,
Released from anguish by thy foes,
Daughter of Rome! shalt find repose.
Yes, on thy country's lovely sky
Fix yet once more thy parting eye!
A few short hours—and all shall be
The silent and the past for thee.
Oh! thus with tempests of a day
We struggle, and we pass away,
Like the wild billows as they sweep,
Leaving no vestige on the deep!
And o'er thy dark and lowly bed
The sons of future days shall tread,
The pangs, the conflicts, of thy lot
By them unknown, by thee forgot.

THE LAST BANQUET OF ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA.

["Antony, concluding that he could not die more honorably than in battle, determined to attack Cæsar at the same time both by sea and land. The night preceding the execution of this design, he ordered his servants at supper to render him their best services that evening, and fill the wine round plentifully, for the day following they might belong to another master, whilst he lay extended on the ground, no longer of consequence either to them or to himself. His friends were affected, and wept to hear him talk thus; which when he perceived, he encouraged them by assurances that his expectations of a glorious victory were at least equal to those of an honorable death. At the dead of night, when universal silence reigned through the city—a silence that was deepened by the awful thought of the ensuing day—on a sudden was heard the sound of musical instruments, and a noise which resembled the exclamations of Bacchanals. This tumultuous procession seemed to pass through the whole city, and to go out at the gate which led to the enemy's camp. Those who reflected on this prodigy concluded that Bacchus, the god whom Antony affected to imitate, had then forsaken him."—LANGHORNE'S *Plutarch.*]

Thy foes had girt thee with their dead array,
  O stately Alexandria!—yet the sound
Of mirth and music, at the close of day,
  Swelled from thy splendid fabrics, far around
O'er camp and wave. Within the royal hall,
  In gay magnificence the feast was spread;
And, brightly streaming from the pictured wall,
  A thousand lamps their trembling lustre shed.
O'er many a column, rich with precious dyes,
That tinge the marble's vein, 'neath Afric's burning skies

And soft and clear that wavering radiance played
  O'er sculptured forms, that round the pillared scene
Calm and majestic rose, by art arrayed
  In godlike beauty, awfully serene.
Oh! how unlike the troubled guests reclined
  Round that luxurious board!—in every face
Some shadow from the tempest of the mind
  Rising by fits, the searching eye might trace,
Though vainly masked in smiles which are not mirth,
But the proud spirit's veil thrown o'er the woes of earth.

Their brows are bound with wreathes, whose transient bloom
  May still survive the wearers—and the rose
Perchance may scarce be withered when the tomb
  Receives the mighty to its dark repose!
The day must dawn on battle, and may set
  In death—but fill the mantling wine-cup high!
Despair is fearless, and the Fates e'en yet
  Lend her one hour for parting revelry.
They who the empire of the world possessed,
Would taste its joys again, ere all exchanged for rest.

Its joys! oh, mark yon proud triumvir's mien,
And read their annals on that brow of care;
'Midst pleasure's lotus-bowers his steps have been;
Earth's brightest pathway led him to despair.
Trust not the glance that fain would yet inspire
The buoyant energies of days gone by;
There is delusion in its meteor-fire,
And all within is shame, is agony!
Away! the tear in bitterness may flow,
But there are smiles which bear a stamp of deeper woe.

Thy cheek is sunk, and faded as thy fame,
O lost, devoted Roman! yet thy brow
To that ascendant and undying name,
Pleads with stern loftiness that right e'en now.
Thy glory is departed, but hath left
A lingering light around thee—in decay
Not less than kingly, though of all bereft,
Thou seem'st as empire had not passed away
Supreme in ruin! teaching hearts elate,
A deep, prophetic dread of still mysterious fate!

But thou, enchantress queen! whose love hath made
His desolation—thou art by his side,
In all thy sovereignty of charms arrayed,
To meet the storm with still unconquered pride.
Imperial being! e'en though many a stain
Of error be upon thee, there is power
In thy commanding nature, which shall reign
O'er the stern genius of misfortune's hour;
And the dark beauty of thy troubled eye
E'en now is all illumed with wild sublimity.

Thine aspect, all impassioned, wears a light
Inspiring and inspired—thy cheek a dye,
Which rises not from joy, but yet is bright
With the deep glow of feverish energy.
Proud siren of the Nile! thy glance is fraught
With an immortal fire—in every beam
It darts, there kindles some heroic thought,
But wild and awful as a sibyl's dream;
For thou with death hast communed, to attain
Dread knowledge of the pangs that ransom from the chain.

And the stern courage by such musings lent,
Daughter of Afric! o'er thy beauty throws
The grandeur of a regal spirit, blent
With all the majesty of mighty woes;
While he, so fondly, fatally adored,
Thy fallen Roman, gazes on thee yet,
Till scarce the soul, that once exulting soared,
Can deem the day-star of its glory set;
Scarce his charmed heart believes that power can be
In sovereign fate, o'er him thus fondly loved by thee.

But there is sadness in the eyes around,
Which marked that ruined leader, and survey
His changeful mien, whence oft the gloom profound
Strange triumph chases haughtily away.
"Fill the bright goblet, warrior guests!" he cries;
"Quaff, ere we part, the generous nectar deep!
Ere sunset gild once more the western skies,
Your chief in cold forgetfulness may sleep,
While sounds of revel float o'er shore and sea,
And the red bowl again is crowned—but not for me.

"Yet weep not thus—the struggle is not o'er,
O victors of Philippi! many a field
Hath yielded palms to us:—one effort more
By one stern conflict must our doom be sealed!
Forget not, Romans! o'er a subject world
How royally your eagle's wing hath spread,
Though, from his eyrie of dominion hurled,
Now bursts the tempest on his crested head!
Yet sovereign still, if banished from the sky,
The sun's indignant bird, he must not droop—but die."

The feast is o'er. 'Tis night, the dead of night—
Unbroken stillness broods o'er earth and deep;
From Egypt's heaven of soft and starry light
The moon looks cloudless o'er a world of sleep.
For those who wait the morn's awakening beams,
The battle signal to decide their doom,
Have sunk to feverish rest and troubled dreams—
Rest that shall soon be calmer in the tomb,
Dreams, dark and ominous, but *there* to cease,
When sleep the lords of war in solitude and peace.

Wake, slumberers, wake! Hark! heard ye not a sound
Of gathering tumult?—Near and nearer still
Its murmur swells. Above, below, around,
Bursts a strange chorus forth, confused and shrill.
Wake, Alexandria! through thy streets the tread
Of steps unseen is hurrying, and the note
Of pipe and lyre and trumpet, wild and dread,
Is heard upon the midnight air to float;
And voices, clamorous as in frenzied mirth,
Mingled their thousand tones, which are not of the earth.

These are no mortal sounds—their thrilling strain
Hath more mysterious power, and birth more high;
And the deep horror chilling every vein
Owns them of stern, terrific augury.
Beings of worlds unknown! ye pass away,
O ye invisible and awful throng!
Your echoing footsteps and resounding lay
To Cæsar's camp exulting move along.
Thy gods forsake thee, Antony! the sky
By that dread sign reveals thy doom—"Despair and die!"

ALARIC IN ITALY.

[After describing the conquest of Greece and Italy by the German and Scythian hordes united under the command of Alaric, the historian of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* thus proceeds:—"Whether fame, or conquest, or riches were the object of Alaric, he pursued that object with an indefatigable ardor which could neither be quelled by adversity nor satiated by success. No sooner had he reached the extreme land of Italy, than he was attracted by the neighboring prospect of a fair and peaceful island. Yet even the possession of Sicily he considered only as an intermediate step to the important expedition which he already meditated against the continent of Africa. The straits of Rhegium and Messina are twelve miles in length and in the narrowest passage, about one mile and a half broad: and the fabulous monsters of the deep, the rocks of Scylla and the whirlpool of Charybdis, could terrify none but the most timid and unskilful mariners: yet, as soon as the first division of the Goths had embarked, a sudden tempest arose, which sunk or scattered many of the transports. Their courage was daunted by the terrors of a new element; and the whole design was defeated by the premature death of Alaric, which fixed, after a short illness, the fatal term of his conquests. The ferocious character of the barbarians was displayed in the funeral of a hero, whose valor and fortune they celebrated with mournful applause. By the labor of a captive multitude, they forcibly diverted the course of the Busentinus, a small river that washes the walls of Consentia. The royal sepulchre, adorned with the splendid spoils and trophies of Rome, was constructed in the vacant bed: the waters were then restored to their natural channel, and the secret spot where the remains of Alaric had been deposited was forever concealed by the inhuman massacre of the prisoners who had been employed to execute the work."—See *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Emplre*, vol. v. p. 329.]

HEARD ye the Gothic trumpet's blast?
The march of hosts as Alaric passed?
His steps have tracked that glorious clime,
The birthplace of heroic time;
But he, in northern deserts bred,
Spared not the living for the dead,
Nor heard the voice, whose pleading cries
From temple and from tomb arise.
He passed—the light of burning fanes
Hath been his torch o'er Grecian plains;
And woke they not, the brave, the free,
To guard their own Thermopylæ?
And left they not their silent dwelling,
When Scythia's note of war was swelling?
No! where the bold Three Hundred slept,
Sad freedom battled not—but wept!
For nerveless then the Spartan's hand,
And Thebes could rouse no Sacred Band;
Nor one high soul from slumber broke,
When Athens owned the Northern yoke.

But was there none for *thee* to dare
The conflict, scorning to despair?
O city of the seven proud hills!
Whose name e'en yet the spirit thrills,
As doth a clarion's battle-call—
Didst thou too, ancient empress, fall?
Did no Camillus from the chain
Ransom thy Capitol again?
Oh! who shall tell the days to be,
No patriot rose to bleed for thee?

Heard ye the Gothic trumpet's blast?
The march of hosts, as Alaric passed?

That fearful sound, at midnight deep,
Burst on the eternal city's sleep :
How woke the mighty ? She, whose will
So long had bid the world be still,
Her sword a sceptre, and her eye
The ascendant star of destiny !
She woke—to view the dread array
Of Scythians rushing to their prey,
To hear her streets resound the cries
Poured from a thousand agonies !
While the strange light of flames, that gave
A ruddy glow to Tiber's wave,
Bursting in that terrific hour
From fane and palace, dome and tower,
Revealed the throngs, for aid divine
Clinging to many a worshipped shrine :
Fierce fitful radiance wildly shed
O'er spear and sword, with carnage red,
Shone o'er the suppliant and the flying,
And kindled pyres for Romans dying.

Weep, Italy ! alas, that e'er
Should tears alone thy wrongs declare!
The time hath been when *thy* distress
Had roused up empires for redress !
Now, her long race of glory run,
Without a combat Rome is won,
And from her plundered temples forth
Rush the fierce children of the north,
To share beneath more genial skies
Each joy their own rude clime denies.

Ye who on bright Campania's shore
Bade your fair villas rise of yore,
With all their graceful colonnades,
And crystal baths, and myrtle shades,
Along the blue Hesperian deep,
Whose glassy waves in sunshine sleep,
Beneath your olive and your vine
Far other inmates now recline,
And the tall plane, whose roots ye fed
With rich libations duly shed,
O'er guests, unlike your vanished friends,
Its bowery canopy extends.
For them the southern heaven is glowing,
The bright Falernian nectar flowing;
For them the marble halls unfold
Where nobler beings dwelt of old
Whose children for barbarian lords
Touch the sweet lyre's resounding chords,
Or wreaths of Pæstan roses twine,
To crown the sons of Elbe and Rhine.
Yet, though luxurious they repose
Beneath Corinthian porticoes,
While round them into being start
The marvels of triumphant art ;
Oh ! not for them hath genius given
To Parian stone the fire of heaven,
Enshrining in the forms he wrought
A bright eternity of thought.
In vain the natives of the skies
In breathing marble round them rise,
And sculptured nymphs of fount or glade
People the dark-green laurel shade;
Cold are the conqueror's heart and eye
To visions of divinity ;
And rude his hand which dares deface
The models of immortal grace.

Arouse ye from your soft delights!
Chieftains ! the war note's call invites ;
And other lands must yet be won,
And other deeds of havoc done.
Warriors ! your flowery bondage break,
Sons of the stormy north, awake !
The barks are launching from the steep,
Soon shall the Isle of Ceres weep,
And Afric's burning winds afar
Waft the shrill sounds of Alaric's war.
Where shall his race of victory close?
When shall the ravaged earth repose?

But hark! what wildly mingling cries
From Scythia's camp tumultuous rise?
Why swells dread Alaric's name on air?
A sterner conqueror hath been there!
A conqueror—yet his paths are peace,
He comes to bring the world's release;
He of the sword that knows no sheath,
The avenger, the deliverer—Death!

Is then that daring spirit fled?
Doth Alaric slumber with the dead?
Tamed are the warrior's pride and strength,
And he and earth are calm at length.
The land where heaven unclouded shines,
Where sleep the sunbeams on the vines;
The land by conquest made his own,
Can yield him now—a grave alone.
But his—her lord from Alp to sea—
No common sepulchre shall be!
Oh! make his tomb where mortal eye
Its buried wealth may ne'er descry!
Where mortal foot may never tread
Above a victor-monarch's bed
Let not his royal dust be hid
Neath star-aspiring pyramid;
Nor bid the gathered mound arise,
To bear his memory to the skies.
Years roll away—oblivion claims
Her triumph o'er heroic names;
And hands profane disturb the clay
That once was fired with glory's ray;
And Avarice, from their secret gloom,
Drags e'en the treasures of the tomb,
But thou, O leader of the free!
That general doom awaits not thee:
Thou, where no step may e'er intrude,
Shalt rest in regal solitude,
Till, bursting on thy sleep profound,
The awakener's final trumpet sound.
Turn ye the waters from their course,
Bid Nature yield to human force,
And hollow in the torrent's bed.
A chamber for the mighty dead.
The work is done—the captive's hand
Hath well obeyed his lord's command.
Within that royal tomb are cast
The richest trophies of the past,
The wealth of many a stately dome,
The gold and gems of plundered Rome;
And when the midnight stars are beaming,
And ocean waves in stillness gleaming,
Stern in their grief, his warriors bear
The Chastener of the Nations there;
To rest, at length, from victory's toil,
Alone, with all an empire's spoil!

Then the freed current's rushing wave
Rolls o'er the secret of the grave;
Then streams the martyred captives blood
To crimson that sepulchral flood,
Whose conscious tide alone shall keep
The mystery in its bosom deep.
Time hath passed on since then—and swept
From earth the urns where heroes slept;
Temples of gods and domes of kings,
Are mouldering with forgotten things;
Yet shall not ages e'er molest
The viewless home of Alaric's rest:
Still rolls, like them, the unfailing river,
The guardian of his dust forever.

THE WIFE OF ASDRUBAL.

["This governor, who had braved death when it was at a distance, and protested that the sun should never see him survive Carthage—this fierce Asdrubal was so mean-spirited as to come alone, and privately throw himself at the conqueror's feet. The general, pleased to see his proud rival humbled, granted his life, and kept him to grace his triumph. The Carthaginians in the citadel no sooner understood that their commander had abandoned the place, than they threw open the gates, and put the proconsul in possession of Byrsa. The Romans had now no enemy to contend with but the nine hundred deserters, who, being reduced to despair, retired into the temple of Esculapius, which was a second citadel within the first; there the proconsul attacked them; and these unhappy wretches, finding there was no way to escape, set fire to the temple. As the flames spread, they retreated from one part to another, till they got to the roof of the building; then Asdrubal's wife appeared in her best apparel, as if the day of her death had been a day of triumph; and after having uttered the most bitter imprecations against her husband, whom she saw standing below with Emilianus,—'Base coward!' said she, 'the mean things thou hast done to save thy life shall not avail thee; thou shalt die this instant, at least in thy two children. Having thus spoken, she drew out a dagger, stabbed them both, and while they were yet struggling for life, threw them from the top of the temple, and leaped down after them into the flames."—*Ancient Universal History.*]

The sun sets brightly—but a ruddier glow
O'er Afric's heaven the flames of Carthage throw;
Her walls have sunk, and pyramids of fire
In lurid splendor from her domes aspire;
Swayed by the wind, they wave—while glares the sky
As when the desert's red simoom is nigh;
The sculptured altar and the pillared hall
Shine out in dreadful brightness ere they fall;
Far o'er the seas the light of ruin streams,
Rock, wave, and isle are crimsoned by its beams;
While captive thousands, bound in Roman chains,
Gaze in mute horror on their burning fanes;
And shouts of triumph, echoing far around,
Swell from the victor's tents with ivy crowned.[1]
But mark! from yon fair temple's loftiest height
What towering form bursts wildly on the sight,
All regal in magnificent attire,
And sternly beauteous in terrific ire?
She might be deemed a Pythia in the hour
Of dread communion and delirious power;
A being more than earthly, in whose eye
There dwells a strange and fierce ascendancy.
The flames are gathering round—intensely bright,
Full on her features glares their meteor-light;
But a wild courage sits triumphant there,
The stormy grandeur of a proud despair;
A daring spirit, in its woes elate,
Mightier than death, untameable by fate.

[1] It was a Roman custom to adorn the tents of victors with ivy.

The dark profusion of her locks unbound,
Waves like a warrior's floating plumage round ;
Flushed is her cheek, inspired her haughty mien,
She seems the avenging goddess of the scene.
Are those *her* infants, that with suppliant cry
Cling round her, shrinking as the flame draws nigh,
Clasp with their feeble hands her gorgeous vest,
And fain would rush for shelter to her breast ?
Is that a mother's glance, where stern disdain,
And passion, awfully vindictive, reign ?

Fixed is her eye on Asdrubal, who stands
Ignobly safe amidst the conquering bands ;
On him who left her to that burning tomb,
Alone to share her children's martyrdom ;
Who, when his country perished, fled the strife,
And knelt to win the worthless boon of life.
"Live, traitor, live !" she cries, "since dear to thee,'
E'en in thy fetters, can existence be !
Scorned and dishonored live !—with blasted name,
The Roman's triumph not to grace, but shame.
O slave in spirit ! bitter be thy chain
With tenfold anguish to avenge my pain !
Still may the manes of thy children rise
To chase calm slumber from thy wearied eyes ;
Still may their voices on the haunted air
In fearful whispers tell thee to despair,
Till vain remorse thy withered heart consume,
Scourged by relentless shadows of the tomb !
E'en now my sons shall die, and thou, their sire,
In bondage safe, shalt yet in them expire.
Think'st thou I love them not ?—'Twas thine to fly—
'Tis mine with these to suffer and to die.
Behold their fate !—the arms that cannot save
Have been their cradle, and shall be their grave."

Bright in her hand the lifted dagger gleams,
Swift from her children's hearts the life-blood streams,
With frantic laugh she clasps them to the breast
Whose woes and passions soon shall be at rest ;
Lifts one appealing, frenzied glance on high,
Then deep 'midst rolling flames is lost to mortal eye.

HELIODORUS IN THE TEMPLE.

[From *Maccabees*, book ii., chapter 3, v. 21. "Then it would have pitied a man to see the falling down of the multitude of all sorts, and the fear of the high priest, being in such an agony.—22. They then called upon the Almighty Lord to keep the things committed of trust safe and sure, for those that had committed them.—23. Nevertheless Heliodorus executed that which was decreed.—24. Now as he was there present himself, with his guard about the treasury, the Lord of Spirits, and the Prince of all Power, caused a great apparition, so that all that presumed to come in with him were astonished at the power of God, and fainted, and were sore afraid.—25. For there appeared unto them a horse with a terrible rider upon him, and adorned with a very fair covering, and he ran fiercely, and smote at Heliodorus with his fore feet, and it seemed that he that sat upon the horse had complete harness of gold.—26. Moreover, two other young men appeared before him, notable in strength, excellent in beauty, and comely in apparel, who stood by him on either side, and scourged him continually, and gave him many sore stripes.—27. And Heliodorus fell suddenly to the ground, and was compassed with great darkness; but they that were with him took him up, and put him into a litter.—28. Thus him that lately came with great train, and with all his guard, into the said treasury, they carried out, being unable to help himself with his weapons, and manifestly they acknowledged the power of God.—29. For he by the hand of God was cast down, and lay speechless, without all hope of life."]

A SOUND of woe in Salem!—mournful cries
  Rose from her dwellings—youthful cheeks were pale,
Tears flowing fast from dim and aged eyes,
  And voices mingling in tumultuous wail;
Hands raised to heaven in agony of prayer,
And powerless wrath, and terror, and despair.

Thy daughters, Judah! weeping, laid aside
  The regal splendor of their fair array,
With the rude sackcloth girt their beauty's pride,
  And thronged the streets in hurrying, wild dismay;
While knelt thy priests before *His* awful shrine,
Who made, of old, renown and empire thine.

But on the spoiler moves—the temple's gate,
  The bright, the beautiful, his guards unfold;
And all the scene reveals its solemn state,
  Its courts and pillars, rich with sculptured gold;
And man, with eye unhallowed, views the abode,
The severed spot, the dwelling-place of God.

Where art thou, Mighty Presence! that of yore
  Wert wont between the cherubim to rest,
Veiled in a cloud of glory, shadowing o'er
  Thy sanctuary the chosen and the blest?
Thou! that didst make fair Sion's ark thy throne,
And call the oracle's recess thine own!

Angel of God! that through the Assyrian host,
  Clothed with the darkness of the midnight hour,

To tame the proud, to hush the invader's boast,
Didst pass triumphant in avenging power,
Till burst the day-spring on the silent scene,
And death alone revealed where thou hadst been.

Wilt thou not wake, O Chastener! in thy might,
To guard thine ancient and majestic hill,
Where oft from heaven the full Shechinah's light
Hath streamed the house of holiness to fill?
Oh! yet once more defend thy loved domain,
Eternal one! Deliverer! rise again!

Fearless of thee, the plunderer, undismayed,
Hastes on, the sacred chambers to explore
Where the bright treasures of the fane are laid,
The orphan's portion, and the widow's store;
What recks *his* heart though age unsuccored die,
And want consume the cheek of infancy?

Away, intruders!—hark! a mighty sound!
Behold, a burst of light!—away, away!
A fearful glory fills the temple round,
A vision bright in terrible array!
And lo! a steed of no terrestrial frame,
His path a whirlwind, and his breath a flame!

His neck is clothed with thunder [1]—and his mane
Seems waving fire—the kindling of his eye
Is as a meteor—ardent with disdain,
His glance—his gesture, fierce in majesty!
Instinct with light he seems, and formed to bear
Some dread archangel through the fields of air.

But who is he, in panoply of gold,
Throned on that burning charger? bright his form,
Yet in its brightness awful to behold,
And girt with all the terrors of the storm!
Lightning is on his helmet's crest—and fear
Shrinks from the splendor of his brow severe.

And by his side two radiant warriors stand
All-armed, and kingly in commanding grace—
Oh! more than kingly—godlike!—sternly grand:
Their port indignant, and each dazzling face
Beams with the beauty to immortals given,
Magnificent in all the wrath of heaven.

Then sinks each gazer's heart—each knee is bowed
In trembling awe—but, as to fields of fight,
The unearthly war-steed, rushing through the crowd,
Bursts on their leader in terrific might;

1 "Hast thou given the horse strength? Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?"—Job xxxix. 19.

And the stern angels of that dread abode
Pursue its plunderer with the scourge of God.

Darkness—thick darkness !—low on earth he lies,
Rash Heliodorus—motionless and pale—
Bloodless his cheek, and o'er his shrouded eyes
Mists, as of death, suspend their shadowy veil ;
And thus the oppressor, by his fear-struck train,
Is borne from that inviolable fane.

The light returns—the warriors of the sky
Have passed, with all their dreadful pomp, away ;
Then wakes the timbrel, swells the song on high
Triumphant as in Judah's elder day ;
Rejoice, O city of the sacred hill !
Salem, exult ! thy God is with thee still.

NIGHT-SCENE IN GENOA.

FROM SISMONDI'S "REPUBLIQUES ITALIENNES."

"En même temps que les Génois poursuivoient avec adeur la guerre contre Pise, ils étoient déchirés eux-mêmes par une discorde civile. Les consuls de l'année 1169, pour rétablir la paix dans leur patrie, au milieu des factions sourdes à leur voix et plus puissantes qu'eux, furent obligés d'ourdir en quelque sorte une conspiration. Ils commencèrent par s'assurer secrètement des dispositions pacifiques de plusieurs des citoyens, qui cependant étoient entraînés dans les émeutes par leur parenté avec les chefs de faction ; puis, se concertant avec le vénérable vieillard, Hugues, leur archevêque, ils firent, long-temps avant le lever du soleil, appeler au son des cloches les citoyens au parlement ; ils se flattoient que la surprise et l'alarme de cette convocation inattendue, au milieu de l'obscurité de la nuit, rendroit l'assemblée et plus complète et plus docile. Les citoyens, en accourant au parlement général, virent, au milieu de la place publique, le vieil archevêque, entouré de son clergé en habit de cérémonies, et portant des torches allumées, tandis que les reliques de Saint Jean Baptiste, le protecteur de Gênes, étoient exposées devant lui, et que les citoyens les plus respectables portoient à leurs mains des croix suppliantes. Dès que l'assemblée fut formée, le vieillard se leva, et de sa voix cassée il conjura les chefs de parti, au nom du Dieu de paix, au nom du salut de leurs âmes, au nom de leur patrie et de la liberté, dont leurs discordes entraîneroient la ruine, de jurer sur l'évangile l'oubli de leurs querelles, et la paix à venir.

"Les hérauts, dès qu'il eut fini de parler, s'avancèrent aussitôt vers Roland Avogado, le chef de l'une des factions, qui étoit présent à l'assemblée, et, secondés par les acclamations de tout le peuple, et par les prières de ses parens eux-mêmes, ils le sommèrent de se conformer au vœu des consuls et de la nation.

"Roland, à leur approche, déchira ses habits, et, s'asseyant par terre en versant des larmes, il appela à haute voix les morts qu'il avoit juré de venger, et qu ne lui permettoient pas de pardonner leurs vieilles offenses. Comme on ne pouvoit le déterminer à s'avancer, les consuls eux-mêmes, l'archevêque et le clergé, s'approchèrent de lui, et, renouvelant leurs prières, ils l'entraînèrent enfin, et lui firent jurer sur l'evangile l'oubli de ses inimitiés passées.

"Les chefs du parti contraire, Foulques de Castro, et Ingo de Volta, n'étoient pas présens à l'assemblée, mais le peuple et le clergé se portèrent en foule à leurs maisons : ils les trouvèrent déjà ébranlés par ce qu'ils venoient d'apprendre, et, profitant de leur émotion, ils leur firent jurer une réconciliation sincère, et donner le baiser de paix aux chefs de la faction opposée. Alors les cloches de la ville sonnèrent en témoignage d'allégresse, et l'archevêque de retour sur la place publique entonna un Te Deum avec tout le peuple, en honneur du Dieu de paix qui avoit sauvé leur patrie."—*Histoire des Republiques Italiennes*, vol. ii. pp. 149, 150.]

In Genoa, when the sunset gave
Its last warm purple to the wave,
No sound of war, no voice of fear,
Was heard, announcing danger near ;
Though deadliest foes were there, whose hate
But slumbered till its hour of fate,
Yet calmly, at the twilight's close,
Sunk the wide city to repose.

But when deep midnight reigned around,
All sudden woke the alarm-bell's sound,
Full swelling, while the hollow breeze
Bore its dread summons o'er the seas.
Then, Genoa, from their slumber started
Thy sons, the free, the fearless-hearted ;
Then mingled with the awakening peal
Voices, and steps, and clash of steel,
Arm, warriors, arm ! for danger calls,
Arise to guard your native walls !
With breathless haste the gathering throng
Hurry the echoing streets along ;
Through darkness rushing to the scene
Where their bold counsels still convene.
—But there a blaze of torches bright
Pours its red radiance on the night,
O'er fane, and dome, and column playing,
With every fitful night-wind swaying :
Now floating o'er each tall arcade,
Around the pillared scene displayed,
In light relieved by depth of shade :
And now with ruddy meteor-glare,
Full streaming on the silvery hair
And the bright cross of him who stands
Rearing that sign with suppliant hands,
Girt with his consecrated train,
The hallowed servants of the fane.
Of life's past woes, the fading trace
Hath given that aged patriarch's face
Expression holy, deep, resigned,
The calm sublimity of mind.
Years o'er his snowy head have passed,
And left him of his race the last ;
Alone on earth—yet still his mien
Is bright with majesty serene ;
And those high hopes, whose guiding-star
Shines from the eternal worlds afar,
Have with that light illumed his eye,
Whose fount is immortality,
And o'er his features poured a ray
Of glory, not to pass away.
He seems a being who hath known
Communion with his God alone,
On earth by naught but pity's tie
Detained a moment from on high !
One to sublimer worlds allied,
One, from all passion purified,
E'en now half mingled with the sky
And all prepared—oh ! not to die—
But, like the prophet, to aspire,
In heaven's triumphal car of fire.
He speaks—and from the throngs around
Is heard not e'en a whispered sound ;
Awe-struck each heart, and fixed each glance,
They stand as in a spellbound trance :
He speaks—oh ! who can hear nor own
The might of each prevailing tone ?

"Chieftains and warriors ! ye, so long
Aroused to strife by mutual wrong,
Whose fierce and far-transmitted hate
Hath made your country desolate ;
Now by the love ye bear her name,
By that pure spark of holy flame
On freedom's altar brightly burning,
But, once extinguished, ne'er returning ;
By all your hopes of bliss to come,
When burst the bondage of the tomb ;
By Him, the God who bade us live
To aid each other, and forgive—

I call upon ye to resign
Your discords at your country's shrine,
Each ancient feud in peace atone,
Wield your keen swords for her alone,
And swear upon the cross, to cast
Oblivion's mantle o'er the past!"

No voice replies. The holy bands
Advance to where yon chieftain stands,
With folded arms, and brow of gloom
O'ershadowed by his floating plume.
To him they lift the cross—in vain:
He turns—oh! say not with disdain,
But with a mien of haughty grief,
That seeks not, e'en from heaven, relief.
He rends his robes—he sternly speaks—
Yet tears are on the warrior's cheeks.

"Father! not thus the wounds may close,
Inflicted by eternal foes.
Deemest thou *thy* mandate can efface
The dread volcano's burning trace?
Or bid the earthquake's ravaged scene
Be smiling as it once hath been?
No! for the deeds the sword hath done
Forgiveness is not lightly won;
The words by hatred spoke may not
Be as a summer breeze forgot!
'Tis vain—we deem the war-feud's rage
A portion of our heritage.
Leaders, now slumbering with their fame,
Bequeathed us that undying flame;
Hearts that have long been still and cold
Yet rule us from their silent mould;
And voices, heard on earth no more,
Speak to our spirits as of yore.
Talk not of mercy—blood alone
The stain of bloodshed may atone;
Naught else can pay that mighty debt,
The dead forbid us to forget."

He pauses—from the patriarch's brow
There beams more lofty grandeur now:
His reverend form, his aged hand,
Assume a gesture of command,
His voice is awful, and his eye
Filled with prophetic majesty.

"The dead!—and deemest thou *they* retain
Aught of terrestrial passion's stain?
Of guilt incurred in days gone by,
Aught but the fearful penalty?
And sayest thou, mortal! blood alone
For deeds of slaughter may atone?
There *hath* been blood—by Him 'twas shed
To expiate every crime who bled;
The absolving God who died to save,
And rose in victory from the grave!
And by that stainless offering given
Alike for all on earth to heaven;
By that inevitable hour
When death shall vanquish pride and power,
And each departing passion's force
Concentrate all in late remorse;
And by the day when doom shall be
Passed on earth's millions, and on thee—
The doom that shall not be repealed,
Once uttered, and forever sealed—
I summon thee, O child of clay!
To cast thy darker thoughts away,
And meet thy foes in peace and love,
As thou wouldst join the blest above."

Still as he speaks, unwonted feeling
Is o'er the chieftain's bosom stealing;
Oh! not in vain the pleading cries
Of anxious thousands round him rise;
He yields—devotion's mingled sense
Of faith, and fear, and penitence,

Pervading all his soul, he bows
To offer on the cross his vows,
And that best incense to the skies,
Each evil passion's sacrifice.

Then tears from warriors' eyes were flowing,
High hearts with soft emotions glowing ;
Stern foes as long-loved brothers greeting,
And ardent throngs in transport meeting ;
And eager footsteps forward pressing,
And accents loud in joyous blessing ;
And when their first wild tumult cease,
A thousand voices echo "Peace!"

Twilight's dim mist hath rolled away,
And the rich Orient burns with day ;
Then as to greet the sunbeam's birth,
Rises the choral hymn of earth—
The exulting strain through Genoa swelling,
Of peace and holy rapture telling.

Far float the sounds o'er vale and steep,
The seaman hears them on the deep,
So mellowed by the gale, they seem
As the wild music of a dream.
But not on mortal ear alone
Peals the triumphant anthem's tone ;
For beings of a purer sphere
Bend with celestial joy to hear.

THE TROUBADOUR AND RICHARD CŒUR DE LION.

["Not only the place of Richard's confinement" (when thrown into prison by the Duke of Austria), "if we believe the literary history of the times, but even the circumstance of his captivity, was carefully concealed by his vindictive enemies : and both might have remained unknown but for the grateful attachment of a Provençal bard, or minstrel, named Blondel, who had shared that prince's friendship and tasted his bounty. Having travelled over all the European continent to learn the destiny of his beloved patron, Blondel accidentally got intelligence of a certain castle in Germany, where a prisoner of distinction was confined, and guarded with great vigilance. Persuaded by a secret impulse that this prisoner was the King of England, the minstrel repaired to the place : but the gates of the castle were shut against him, and he could obtain no information relative to the name or quality of the unhappy person it secured. In this extremity, he bethought himself of an expedient for making the desired discovery. He chanted, with a loud voice, some verses of a song which had been composed partly by himself, partly by Richard ; and to his unspeakable joy, on making a pause, he heard it re-echoed and continued by the royal captive.—*Hist. Troubadours.* To this discovery the English monarch is said to have eventually owed his release."—See RUSSEL'S *Modern Europe*, vol. i. p. 369.]

THE Troubadour o'er many a plain
Hath roamed unwearied, but in vain.
O'er many a rugged mountain-scene
And forest wild his track hath been ;
Beneath Calabria's glowing sky
He hath sung the songs of chivalry ;
His voice hath swelled on the Alpine breeze,
And rung through the snowy Pyrenees ;

From Ebro's banks to Danube's wave,
He hath sought his prince, the loved, the brave ;
And yet, if still on earth thou art,
Oh, monarch of the lion-heart !
The faithful spirit, which distress
But heightens to devotedness,
By toil and trial vanquished not,
Shall guide thy minstrel to the spot.

He hath reached a mountain hung with vine,
And woods that wave o'er the lovely Rhine :
The feudal towers that crest its height
Frown in unconquerable might ;
Dark is their aspect of sullen state—
No helmet hangs o'er the massy gate
To bid the wearied pilgrim rest,
At the chieftain's board a welcome guest ;
Vainly rich evening's parting smile
Would chase the gloom of the haughty pile,
That 'midst bright sunshine lowers on high,
Like a thunder cloud in a summer sky.

Not these the halls where a child of song
Awhile may speed the hours along ;
Their echoes should repeat alone
The tyrant's mandate, the prisoner's moan,
Or the wild huntsman's bugle-blast,
When his phantom-train are hurrying past.
The weary minstrel paused—his eye
Roved o'er the scene despondingly :
Within the lengthening shadow, cast
By the fortress-towers and ramparts vast,
Lingering he gazed. The rocks around
Sublime in savage grandeur frowned ;
Proud guardians of the regal flood
In giant strength the mountains stood—
By torrents cleft, by tempests riven,
Yet mingling still with the calm blue heaven.
Their peaks were bright with a sunny glow,
But the Rhine all shadowy rolled below ;
In purple tints the vineyard smiled,
But the woods beyond waved dark and wild ;
Nor pastoral pipe, nor convent's bell,
Was heard on the sighing breeze to swell ;
But all was lonely, silent, rude,
A stern, yet glorious solitude.

But hark ! that solemn stillness breaking,
The Troubadour's wild song is waking.
Full oft that song, in days gone by,
Hath cheered the sons of chivalry ;
It hath swelled o'er Judah's mountains lone,
Hermon ! thy echoes have learned its tone ;
On the Great Plain its notes have rung,
The leagued Crusaders' tents among ;
'Twas loved by the Lion heart, who won
The palm in the field of Ascalon ;
And now afar o'er the rocks of Rhine
Peals the bold strain of Palestine.

THE TROUBADOUR'S SONG.

"Thine hour is come, and the stake is set,"
The Soldan cried to the captive knight,
"And the sons of the Prophet in throngs are met
To gaze on the fearful sight.

"But be our faith by thy lips professed,
The faith of Mecca's shrine,
Cast down the red-cross that marks thy vest,
And life shall yet be thine."

"I have seen the flow of my bosom's blood,
And gazed with undaunted eye ;
I have borne the bright cross through fire and blood
And think'st thou I fear to die ?

"I have stood where thousands, by Salem's towers,
Have fallen for the name Divine ;
And the faith that cheered *their* closing hours
Shall be the light of mine."

"Thus wilt thou die in the pride of health,
And the glow of youth's fresh bloom?
Thou art offered life, and pomp, and wealth,
Or torture and the tomb."

"I have been where the crown of thorns was twined
For a dying Saviour's brow;
He spurned the treasures that lure mankind,
And I reject them now!"

"Art thou the son of a noble line
In a land that is fair and blest!
And doth not thy spirit, proud captive! pine,
Again on its shores to rest?

"Thine own is the choice to hail once more
The soil of thy father's birth,
Or to sleep, when thy lingering pangs are o'er,
Forgotten in foreign earth."

"Oh! fair are the vine-clad hills that rise
In the country of my love;
But yet, though cloudless my native skies,
There's a brighter clime above!"

The bard hath paused—for another tone
Blends with the music of his own;
And his heart beats high with hope again,
As a well-known voice prolongs the strain.

"Are there none within thy father's hall,
Far o'er the wide blue main,
Young Christian! left to deplore thy fall
With sorrow deep and vain?"

"There are hearts that still, through all the past,
Unchanging have loved me well;
There are eyes whose tears were streaming fast
When I bade my home farewell.

"Better they wept o'er the warrior's bier
Than the apostate's living stain;
There's a land where those who loved when here,
Shall meet to love again."

'Tis he! thy prince—long sought, long lost,
The leader of the red-cross host!
'Tis he!—to none thy joy betray,
Young Troubadour! away, away!
Away to the island of the brave,
The gem on the bosom of the wave;
Arouse the sons of the noble soil,
To win their Lion from the toil;
And free the wassail-cup shall flow,
Bright in each hall the hearth shall glow;
The festal board shall be richly crowned,
While knights and chieftains revel round,
And a thousand harps with joy shall ring,
When merry England hails her king.

THE DEATH OF CONRADIN.

FROM SISMONDI'S "REPUBLIQUES ITALIENNES."

["La défaite de Conradin ne devoit mettre une terme ni à ses malheurs, ni aux vengeances du roi (Charles d'Anjou). L'amour du peuple pour l'heritier légitime du trône, avoit éclaté d'une manière effrayante; il pouvoit causer de nouvelles révolution, si Conradin demeuroit en vie: et Charles, revêtant sa défiance et sa cruauté des formes de la justice, resolut de faire pêrir sur l'échafaud le dernier rejeton de la Maison de Souabe, l'unique espérance de son parti. Un seul juge provençal et sujet de Charles, dont les historiens n'ont pas voulu conserver le nom, osa voter pour la mort, d'autres se renfermèrent dans un timide et coupable silence; et Charles, sur l'autorité de ce seul juge, fit prononcer, par Robert de Bari, protonotaire du royaume, la sentence de mort contre Conradin et tous ces compagnons. Cette sentence fut communiquée à Conradin, comme il jouoit aux échecs; on lui laissa peu de temps pour se preparer à son exécution, et la 26 d'Octobre il fut conduit, avec tous ses amis, sur la Place du Marché de Naples, le long du rivage de la mer. Charles étoit présent, avec toute sa cour, et une foule immense entouroit le roi vainqueur et le roi condamné. Conradin étoit entre les mains des bourreaux; il détacha lui-même son manteau, et s'étant mis à genoux pour prier, il se releva en s'écriant: 'Oh, ma mère, quelle profonde douleur te causera la nouvelle qu'on va te porter de moi!' Puis il tourna les yeux sur la foule qui l'entouroit; il vit les larmes, il entendit les sanglots de son peuple: alors, détachant son gant, il jeta au milieu de ses sujets ce gage d'un combat de vengeance, et rendit sa tête au bourreau. Après lui, sur le même echafaud, Charles fit trancher la tête au Duc d'Autriche, aux Comtes Gualferano et Bartolommeo Lancia, et aux Comtes Gerard et Galvano Donoratico de Pise. Par un rafinement de cruauté, Charles voulut que le premier, fils du second, précédât son père, et mourût entre ses bras. Les cadavres, d'après ses ordres, furent exclus d'une terre sainte, et inhumés sans pompe sur le rivage de la mer. Charles II., cependant fit dans la suite, bâtir sur le même lieu une église de Carmelites, comme pour appaiser ces ombres irritées."]

No cloud to dim the splendor of the day
Which breaks o'er Naples and her lovely bay,
And lights that brilliant sea and magic shore
With every tint that charmed the great of yore—
The imperial ones of earth, who proudly bade
Their marble domes e'en Ocean's realm invade.

That race is gone—but glorious Nature here
Maintains unchanged her own sublime career,
And bids these regions of the sun display
Bright hues, surviving empires passed away.

The beam of heaven expands—its kindling smile
Reveals each charm of many a fairy isle,
Whose image floats, in softer coloring drest,
With all its rocks and vines, on Ocean's breast.
Misenum's cape hath caught the vivid ray,
On Roman streamers there no more to play;
Still as of old unalterably bright,
Lovely it sleeps on Posilippo's height,
With all Italia's sunshine to illume
The ilex canopy of Virgil's tomb.
Campania's plains rejoice in light, and spread
Their gay luxuriance o'er the mighty dead;

Fair glittering to thine own transparent skies,
Thy palaces, exulting Naples ! rise ;
While, far on high, Vesuvius rears his peak,
Furrowed and dark with many a lava streak.

Oh, ye bright shores of Circe and the Muse !
Rich with all Nature's and all fiction's hues ;
Who shall explore your regions, and declare
The poet erred to paint Elysium there ?
Call up his spirit, wanderer ! bid him guide
Thy steps, those siren-haunted seas beside ;
And all the scene a lovelier light shall wear,
And spells more potent shall pervade the air.
What though his dust be scattered, and his urn
Long from its sanctuary of slumber torn,
Still dwell the beings of his verse around,
Hovering in beauty o'er the enchanted ground :
His lays are murmured in each breeze that roves
Soft o'er the sunny waves and orange groves ;
His memory's charm is spread o'er shore and sea,
The soul, the genius of Parthenope ;
Shedding o'er myrtle shade and vine-clad hill
The purple radiance of Elysium still.

Yet that fair soil and calm resplendent sky
Have witnessed many a dark reality.
Oft o'er those bright blue seas the gale hath borne
The sighs of exiles never to return.
There with the whisper of Campania's gale
Hath mingled oft affection's funeral-wail,
Mourning for buried heroes—while to her
That glowing land was but her sepulchre.
And there, of old, the dread mysterious moan
Swelled from strange voices of no mortal tone ;
And that wild trumpet, whose unearthly note
Was heard at midnight, o'er the hills to float
Around the spot where Agrippina died,
Denouncing vengeance on the matricide.

Passed are those ages—yet another crime,
Another woe, must stain the Elysian clime.
There stands a scaffold on the sunny shore—
It must be crimsoned ere the day is o'er !
There is a throne in regal pomp arrayed,—
A scene of death from thence must be surveyed.
Marked ye the rushing throngs ?—each mien is pale,
Each hurried glance reveals a fearful tale :
But the deep workings of the indignant breast,
Wrath, hatred, pity, must be all suppressed ;
The burning tear awhile must check its course,
The avenging thought concentrate all its force ;
For tyranny is near, and will not brook
Aught but submission in each guarded look.

Girt with his fierce Provençals, and with mien
Austere in triumph, gazing on the scene,
And in his eye a keen suspicious glance
Of jealous pride and restless vigilance,
Behold the conqueror ! Vainly in his face,
Of gentler feeling hope would seek a trace ;
Cold, proud, severe, the spirit which hath lent
Its haughty stamp to each dark lineament ;
And pleading mercy, in the sternness there,
May read at once her sentence—to despair !

But thou, fair boy ! the beautiful, the brave,
Thus passing from the dungeon to the grave,
While all is yet around thee which can give
A charm to earth, and make it bliss to live ;
Thou on whose form hath dwelt a mother's eye,
Till the deep love that not with thee shall die
Hath grown too full for utterance—Can it be ?
And is this pomp of death prepared for *thee?*
Young, royal Conradin ! who shouldst have known
Of life as yet the sunny smile alone !
Oh ! who can view thee, in the pride and bloom
Of youth, arrayed so richly for the tomb,
Nor feel, deep swelling in his inmost soul,
Emotions tyranny may ne'er control ?
Bright victim ! to Ambition's altar led,
Crowned with all flowers that heaven on earth can shed,
Who, from the oppressor towering in his pride,
May hope for mercy—if to thee denied ?
There is dead silence on the breathless throng,
Dead silence all the peopled shore along,
As on the captive moves—the only sound,
To break that calm so fearfully profound,
The low, sweet murmur of the rippling wave,
Soft as it glides, the smiling shore to lave ;
While on that shore, his own fair heritage,
The youthful martyr to a tyrant's rage
Is passing to his fate : the eyes are dim
Which gaze, through tears that dare not flow, on him.
He mounts the scaffold—doth his footstep fail ?
Doth his lip quiver ? doth his cheek turn pale ?
Oh ! it may be forgiven him if a thought
Cling to that world, for him with beauty fraught,
To all the hopes that promised glory's meed,
And all the affections that with him shall bleed !
If, in his life's young dayspring, while the rose
Of boyhood on his cheek yet freshly glows,
One human fear convulse his parting breath,
And shrink from all the bitterness of death !

But no ! the spirit of his royal race
Sits brightly on his brow—that youthful face
Beams with heroic beauty, and his eye
Is eloquent with injured majesty.

He kneels—but not to man—his heart shall own
Such deep submission to his God alone !
And who can tell with that sustaining power
That God may visit him in fate's dread hour ?
How the still voice, that answers every moan,
May speak of hope—when hope on earth is gone !

That solemn pause is o'er—the youth hath given
One glance of parting love to earth and heaven :
The sun rejoices in the unclouded sky,
Life all around him glows—and he must die !
Yet 'midst his people, undismayed, he throws
The gage of vengeance for a thousand woes ;
Vengeance that, like their own volcano's fire,
May sleep suppressed awhile—but not expire.
One softer image rises o'er his breast,
One fond regret and all shall be at rest !
" Alas, for thee, my mother ! who shall bear
To thy sad heart the tidings of despair,
When thy lost child is gone ?"—that thought can thrill
His soul with pangs one moment more shall still.
The lifted axe is glittering in the sun—
It falls—the race of Conradin is run !
Yet, from the blood which flows that shore to stain,
A voice shall cry to heaven—and not in vain !
Gaze thou, triumphant from thy gorgeous throne,
In proud supremacy of guilt alone,
Charles of Anjou !—but that dread voice shall be
A fearful summoner e'en yet to thee !

The scene of death is closed—the throngs depart,
A deep stern lesson graved on every heart.
No pomp, no funeral rites, no streaming eyes,
High-minded boy ! may grace thine obsequies.
Oh, vainly royal and beloved ! thy grave,
Unsanctified, is bathed by Ocean's wave ;
Marked by no stone, a rude, neglected spot,
Unhonored, unadorned—but *unforgot ;*
For thy deep wrongs in tameless hearts shall live,
Now mutely suffering—never to forgive !

The sun fades from purple heavens away—
A bark hath anchored in the unruffled bay ;
Thence on the beach descends a female form,
Her mien with hope and tearful transport warm ;
But life hath left sad traces on her cheek,
And her soft eyes a chastened heart bespeak,
Inured to woes—yet what were all the past !
She sank not feebly 'neath affliction's blast,
While one bright hope remained—who now shall tell
The uncrowned, the widowed, how her loved one fell ?
To clasp her child, to ransom and to save,
The mother came—and she hath found his grave !

And by that grave, transfixed in speechless grief,
Whose deathlike trance denies a tear's relief,
Awhile she kneels—till roused at length to know,
To feel the might, the fulness of her woe,
On the still air a voice of anguish wild,
A mother's cry is heard—"My Conradin! my child!'

LAYS OF MANY LANDS.

The following pieces may so far be considered a series, as each is intended to be commemorative of some national recollection, popular custom, or tradition. The idea was suggested by Herder's "*Stimmen der Völker in Liedern*;" the execution is, however, different, as the poems of his collection are chiefly translations.

MOORISH BRIDAL SONG.

["It is a custom among the Moors, that a female who dies unmarried is clothed for interment in wedding apparel, and the bridal-song is sung over her remains before they are borne from her home."—See *the Narrative of a Ten Years' Residence in Tripoli, by the Sister-in-law of Mr. Tully.*]

The citron-groves their fruit and flowers were strewing
Around a Moorish palace, while the sigh
Of low sweet summer winds the branches wooing
With music through their shadowy bowers went by;
Music and voices, from the marble halls
Through the leaves gleaming, and the fountain-falls.

A song of joy, a bridal song came swelling
To blend with fragrance in those southern shades,
And told of feasts within the stately dwelling,
Bright lamps, and dancing steps, and gem-crowned maids;
And thus it flowed:—yet something in the lay
Belonged to sadness, as it died away.

"The bride comes forth! her tears no more are falling
To leave the chamber of her infant years;
Kind voices from a distant home are calling;
She comes like day-spring—she hath done with tears;
Now must her dark eye shine on other flowers,
Her soft smile gladden other hearts than ours!—
Pour the rich odors round!

"We haste! the chosen and the lovely bringing;
Love still goes with her from her place of birth;
Deep, silent joy within her soul is springing,
Though in her glance the light no more is mirth!
Her beauty leaves us in its rosy years;
Her sister weeps—but she hath done with tears!—
Now may the timbrel sound!"

Know'st thou for *whom* they sang the bridal numbers—?
One, whose rich tresses were to wave no more!
One, whose pale cheek soft winds, nor gentle slumbers,
Nor Love's own sigh, to rose-tints might restore!
Her graceful ringlets o'er a bier were spread.
Weep for the young, the beautiful,—the dead!

THE BIRD'S RELEASE.

[The Indians of Bengal and of the coast of Malabar bring cages filled with birds to the graves of their friends, over which they set the birds at liberty. This custom is alluded to in the description of Virginia's funeral.—See *Paul and Virginia.*]

Go forth! for she is gone!
With the golden light of her wavy hair,
She has gone to the fields of the viewless air,
She hath left her dwelling lone!

Her voice hath passed away!
It hath passed away like a summer breeze,
When it leaves the hills for the fair blue seas,
Where we may not trace its way.

Go forth, and like her be free!
With thy radiant wing, and thy glancing eye,
Thou hast all the range of the sunny sky,
And what is our grief to thee?

Is it aught e'en to her we mourn?
Doth she look on the tears by her kindred shed?
Doth she rest with the flowers o'er her gentle head,
Or float, on the light wind borne?

We know not—but she is gone!
Her step from the dance, her voice from the song,
And the smile of her eye from the festal throng;
She hath left her dwelling lone!

When the waves at sunset shine,
We may hear thy voice amidst thousands more,
In the scented woods of our glowing shore;
But we shall not know 'tis thine!

Even so with the loved one flown!
Her smile on the starlight may wander by,
Her breath may be near in the wind's low sigh,
Around us—but all unknown.

Go forth, we have loosed thy chain!
We may deck thy cage with the richest flowers
Which the bright day rears in our eastern bowers;
But thou wilt not be lured again.

Even thus may the summer pour
All fragrant things on the land's green breast,
And the glorious earth like a bride be dressed,
But it wins *her* back no more !

THE SWORD OF THE TOMB.

A NORTHERN LEGEND.

[The idea of this ballad is taken from a scene in *Starkother*, a tragedy by the Danish poet Ochlenschlager. The sepulchral fire here alluded to, and supposed to guard the ashes of deceased heroes, is frequently mentioned in the Northern Sagas. Severe sufferings to the departed spirit were supposed by the Scandinavian mythologists to be the consequence of any profanation of the sepulchre.—See OCHLENSCHLAGER'S *Plays*.]

"VOICE of the gifted elder time !
Voice of the charm and the Runic rhyme !
Speak ! from the shades and the depths disclose
How Sigurd may vanquish his mortal foes ;
Voice of the buried past !

"Voice of the grave ! 'tis the mighty hour
When night with her stars and dreams hath power,
And my step hath been soundless on the snows,
And the spell I have sung hath laid repose
On the billow and the blast."

Then the torrents of the North
And the forest pines were still,
While a hollow chant came forth
From the dark sepulchral hill.

"There shines no sun midst the hidden dead,
But where the day looks not the brave may tread ;
There is heard no song, and no mead is poured,
But the warrior may come to the silent board
In the shadow of the night.

"There is laid a sword in thy father's tomb,
And its edge is fraught with thy foeman's doom ;
But soft be thy step through the silence deep,
And move not the urn in the house of sleep,
For the viewless have fearful might!"

Then died the solemn lay,
As a trumpet's music dies,
By the night-wind borne away
Through the wild and stormy skies.

The fir-trees rocked to the wailing blast,
As on through the forest the warrior passed—

Through the forest of Odin, the dim and old—
The dark place of visions and legends, told
By the fires of Northern pine.

The fir-trees rocked, and the frozen ground
Gave back to his footstep a hollow sound ;
And it seemed that the depths of those awful shades,
From the dreary gloom of their long arcades,
Gave warning with voice and sign.

But the wind strange magic knows,
To call wild shape and tone
From the gray wood's tossing boughs,
When Night is on her throne.

The pines closed o'er him with deeper gloom,
As he took the path to the monarch's tomb :
The Pole-star shone, and the heavens were bright
With the arrowy streams of the Northern light ;
But his road through dimness lay !

He passed, in the heart of that ancient wood,
The dark shrine stained with the victim's blood ;
Nor paused till the rock, where a vaulted bed
Had been hewn of old for the kingly dead,
Arose on his midnight way.

Then first a moment's chill
Went shuddering through his breast,
And the steel-clad man stood still
Before that place of rest.

But he crossed at length, with a deep-drawn breath,
The threshold-floor of the hall of Death,
And looked on the pale mysterious fire
Which gleamed from the urn of his warrior-sire
With a strange and solemn light.

Then darkly the words of the boding strain
Like an omen rose on his soul g in—
" Soft be thy step through the silence deep,
And move not the urn in the house of sleep ;
For the viewless have fearful might ! "

But the gleaming sword and shield
Of many a battle-day
Hung o'er that urn, revealed
By the tomb-fire's waveless ray ;

With a faded wreath of oak-leaves bound,
They hung o'er the dust of the far-renowned,
Whom the bright Valkyriur's warning voice
Had called to the banquet where gods rejoice,
And the rich mead flows in light.

With a beating heart his son drew near,
And still rang the verse in his thrilling ear—
"Soft be thy step through the silence deep,
And move not the urn in the house of sleep;
For the viewless have fearful might!"

And many a Saga's rhyme,
And legend of the grave,
That shadowy scene and time
Called back to daunt the brave.

But he raised his arm—and the flame grew dim,
And the sword in its light seemed to wave and swim,
And his faltering hand could not grasp it well—
From the pale oak-wreath, with a clash it fell
Through the chamber of the dead!

The deep tomb rang with the heavy sound,
And the urn lay shivered in fragments round;
And a rush, as of tempests, quenched the fire,
And the scattered dust of his warlike sire
Was strewn on the champion's head.

One moment—and all was still
In the slumberer's ancient hall,
When the rock had ceased to thrill
With the mighty weapon's fall.

The stars were just fading one by one,
The clouds were just tinged by the early sun,
When there streamed through the cavern a torch's flame,
And the brother of Sigurd the valiant came
To seek him in the tomb.

Stretched on his shield, like the steel-girt slain,
By moonlight seen on the battle-plain,
In a speechless trance lay the warrior there;
But he wildly woke when the torch's glare
Burst on him through the gloom.

"The morning wind blows free,
And the hour of chase is near:
Come forth, come forth with me!
What dost thou, Sigurd, here?"

"I have put out the holy sepulchral fire,
I have scattered the dust of my warrior-sire!
It burns on my head, and it weighs down my heart;
But the winds shall not wander without their part
To strew o'er the restless deep!

"In the mantle of death he was here with me now—
There was wrath in his eye, there was gloom on his brow;

And his cold still glance on my spirit fell
With an icy ray and a withering spell—
Oh ! chill is the house of sleep !"

"The morning wind blows free,
And the reddening sun shines clear ;
Come forth, come forth with me !
It is dark and fearful here !"

"He is there, he is there, with his shadowy frown !
But gone from his head is the kingly crown—
The crown from his head, and the spear from his hand
They have chased him far from the glorious land
Where the feast of the gods is spread !

"He must go forth alone on his phantom steed,
He must ride o'er the grave-hills with stormy speed !
His place is no longer at Odin's board,
He is driven from Valhalla without his sword ;
But the slayer shall avenge the dead !"

That sword its fame had won
By the fall of many a crest ;
But its fiercest work was done
In the tomb, on Sigurd's breast ?

VALKYRIUR SONG.

[The Valkyriur, or Fatal Sisters of Northern mythology, were supposed to single out the warriors who were to die in battle, and be received into the halls of Odin.

When a northern chief fell gloriously in war, his obsequies were honored with all possible magnificence. His arms, gold and silver, war-horse, domestic attendants, and whatever else he held most dear, were placed with him on the pile. His dependants and friends frequently made it a point of honor to die with their leader, in order to attend on his shade in Valhalla, or the Palace of Odin. And, lastly, his wife was generally consumed with him on the same pile.—See MALLET'S *Northern Antiquities*, HERBERT'S *Helga*, &c.]

"Tremblingly flashed the inconstant meteor-light,
Showing thin forms like virgins of this earth ;
Save that all signs of human joy or grief,
The flush of passion, smile, or tear, had seemed
On the fixed brightness of each dazzling cheek
Strange and unnatural."—MILMAN.

THE Sea-king woke from the troubled sleep
Of a vision-haunted night,
And he looked from his bark o'er the gloomy deep,
And counted the streaks of light ;
For the red sun's earliest ray
Was to rouse his bands that day
To the stormy joy of fight !

But the dreams of rest were still on earth,
And the silent stars on high,
And there waved not the smoke of one cabin hearth
'Midst the quiet of the sky ;
And along the twilight bay,
In their sleep the hamlets lay,
For they knew not the Norse were nigh !

The Sea-king looked o'er the brooding wave,
He turned to the dusky shore,
And there seem'd, through the arch of a tide-worn cave,
A gleam, as of snow, to pour;
And forth in watery light,
Moved phantoms, dimly white,
Which the garb of woman bore.

Slowly they moved to the billow-side;
And the forms, as they grew more clear,
Seemed each on a tall pale steed to ride,
And a shadowy crest to rear,
And to beckon with faint hand
From the dark and rocky strand,
And to point a gleaming spear.

Then a stillness on his spirit fell,
Before the unearthly train,
For he knew Valhalla's daughters well—
The Choosers of the slain!
And a sudden rising breeze
Bore, across the moaning seas,
To his ear their thrilling strain.

"There are songs in Odin's Hall
For the brave ere night to fall!
Doth the great sun hide its ray?
He must bring a wrathful day!
Sleeps the falchion in its sheath?
Swords must do the work of death!
Regner! — Sea-king! — *thee* we call!—
There is joy in Odin's Hall.

"At the feast, and in the song,
Thou shalt be remembered long!
By the green isles of the flood,
Thou hast left thy track in blood!
On the earth and on the sea,
There are those will speak of thee!
'Tis enough,—the war-gods call,—
There is mead in Odin's Hall!

"Regner! tell thy fair-haired bride
She must slumber at thy side!
Tell the brother of thy breast
Even for him thy grave hath rest!
Tell the raven steed which bore thee,
When the wild wolf fled before thee,
We too with his lord must fall,—
There is room in Odin's Hall!

"Lo! the mighty sun looks forth—
Arm! thou leader of the North!
Lo! the mists of twilight fly—
We must vanish, thou must die!
By the sword and by the spear,
By the hand that knows no fear,
Sea-king! nobly thou shalt fall!—
There is joy in Odin's Hall!

There was arming heard on land and wave,
When afar the sunlight spread,
And the phantom forms of the tide-worn cave
With the mists of morning fled;
But at eve, the kingly hand
Of the battle-axe and brand
Lay cold on a pile of dead!

THE CAVERN OF THE THREE TELLS.

A SWISS TRADITION.

[The three founders of the Helvetic Confederacy are thought to sleep in a cavern near the Lake of Lucerne. The herdsmen call them the Three Tells; and say that they lie there in their antique garb, in quiet slumber; and when Switzerland is in her utmost need, they will awaken and regain the liberties of the land.—See *Quarterly Review*, No. 44.

The Grütli, where the confederates held their nightly meetings, is a meadow on the shore of the Lake of Lucerne, or Lake of the Forest Cantons, here called the Forest-Sea.]

Oh! enter not yon shadowy cave,
Seek not the bright spars there,
Though the whispering pines that o'er it wave
With freshness fill the air:
For there the Patriot Three,
In the garb of old arrayed,
By their native Forest-Sea
On a rocky couch are laid.

The Patriot Three that met of yore
Beneath the midnight sky,
And leagued their hearts on the Grütli shore
In the name of liberty!
Now silently they sleep
Amidst the hills they freed;
But their rest is only deep
Till their country's hour of need.

They start not at the hunter's call,
Nor the Lammer-geyer's cry,
Nor the rush of a sudden torrent's fall,
Nor the Lauwine thundering by;
And the Alpine herdsman's lay,
To a Switzer's heart so dear!
On the wild wind floats away,
No more for them to hear.

But when the battle-horn is blown
Till the Schreckhorn's peaks reply,
When the Jungfrau's cliffs send back the tone
Through their eagles' lonely sky;
When the spear-heads light the lakes,
When trumpets loose the snows,
When the rushing war-steed shakes
The glacier's mute repose;

When Uri's beechen woods wave red
In the burning hamlet's light—

Then from the cavern of the dead
Shall the sleepers wake in might!
With a leap, like Tell's proud leap
When away the helm he flung,
And boldly up the steep
From the flashing billow sprung![1]

They shall wake beside their Forest-Sea,
In the ancient garb they wore
When they linked the hands that made us free,
On the Gürtli's moonlight shore;
And their voices shall be heard,
And be answered with a shout,
Till the echoing Alps are stirred,
And the signal-fires blaze out.

And the land shall see such deeds again
As those of that proud day
When Winkelried, on Sempach's plain,
Through the serried spears made way;
And when the rocks came down
On the dark Morgarten dell,
And the crownèd casques,[2] o'erthrown,
Before our fathers fell!

For the Kühreihen's[3] notes must never sound
In a land that wears the chain,
And the vines on freedom's holy ground
Untrampled must remain;
And the yellow harvests wave
For no stranger's hand to reap,
While within their silent cave
The men of Grütli sleep!

[1] The point of rock on which Tell leaped from the boat of Gessler is marked by a chapel, and called the *Tellensprung*.
[2] *Crowned Helmets*, as a distinction of rank, are mentioned in Simond's *Switzerland*.
[3] The Kühreihen—the celebrated *Ranz des Vaches*.

SWISS SONG.

ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF AN ANCIENT BATTLE.

[The Swiss, even to our days, have continued to celebrate the anniversaries of their ancient battles with much solemnity; assembling in the open air on the fields where their ancestors fought, to hear thanksgivings offered up by the priests, and the names of all who shared in the glory of the day enumerated. They afterwards walk in procession to chapels, always erected in the vicinity of such scenes, where masses are sung for the souls of the departed.—See PLANTA'S *History of the Helvetic Confederacy.*]

Look on the white Alps round!
If yet they gird a land
Where Freedom's voice and step are found,
Forget ye not the band,—
The faithful band, our sires, who fell
Here in the narrow battle-dell!

If yet, the wilds among,
Our silent hearts may burn,
When the deep mountain-horn hath rung,
And home our steps may turn,—
Home!—home!—if still that name be dear,
Praise to the men who perished here.

Look on the white Alps round!
Up to their shining snows
That day the stormy rolling sound,
The sound of battle rose!
Their caves prolonged the trumpet's blast,
Their dark pines trembled as it passed!

They saw the princely crest,
They saw the knightly spear,
The banner and the mail-clad breast,
Borne down, and trampled here!
They saw—and glorying there they stand,
Eternal records to the land!

Praise to the mountain-born,
The brethren of the glen!
By them no steel array was worn,
They stood as peasant-men!
They left the vineyard and the field,
To break an empire's lance and shield!

Look on the white Alps round!
If yet, along their steeps,
Our children's fearless feet may bound,
Free as the chamois leaps:
Teach them in song to bless the band
Amidst whose mossy graves we stand!

If, by the wood-fire's blaze,
When winter stars gleam cold,
The glorious tales of elder days
May proudly yet be told,
Forget not then the shepherd race,
Who made the earth a holy place!

Look on the white Alps round!
If yet the Sabbath-bell
Comes o'er them with a gladdening sound,
Think on the battle-dell!
For blood first bathed its flowery sod,
That chainless hearts might worship God!

THE MESSENGER BIRD.

[Some of the native Brazilians pay great veneration to a certain bird that sings mournfully in the night-time. They say it is a messenger which their deceased friends and relations have sent, and that it brings them news from the other world. —See PICART'S *Ceremonies and Religious Customs.*]

THOU art come from the spirits' land, thou bird!
Thou art come from the spirit's land:
Through the dark pine grove let thy voice be heard,
And tell of the shadowy band!

We know that the bowers are green and fair
In the light of that summer shore;
And we know that the friends we have lost are there,
They are there—and they weep no more!

And we know they have quenched their fever's thirst
From the fountain of youth ere now,[1]
For *there* must the stream in its freshness burst
Which none may find below!

And we know that they will not be lured to earth
From the land of deathless flowers,
By the feast, or the dance, or the song of mirth,
Though their hearts were once with ours:

Though they sat with us by the night-fire's blaze,
And bent with us the bow,
And heard the tales of our fathers' days,
Which are told to others now!

But tell us, thou bird of the solemn strain!
Can those who have loved forget?
We call—and they answer not again:
Do they love—do they love us yet?

Doth the warrior think of his brother *there*,
And the father of his child?
And the chief of those that were wont to share
His wandering through the wild?

We call them far through the silent night,
And they speak not from cave or hill;
We know, thou bird! that their land is bright,
But say, do they love there still?[2]

[1] An expedition was actually undertaken by Juan Ponce de Leon, in the sixteenth century, with a view of discovering a wonderful fountain, believed by the natives of Puerto Rico to spring in one of the Lucayo Isles, and to possess the virtue of restoring youth to all who bathed in its waters.—See ROBERTSON'S *History of America.*

[2] ANSWER TO "THE MESSENGER BIRD."

BY AN AMERICAN QUAKER LADY.

YES! I came from the spirits' land,
From the land that is bright and fair;
I came with a voice from the shadowy band,
To tell that they love you there.

THE STRANGER IN LOUISIANA.

[An early traveller mentions people on the banks of the Mississippi who burst into tears at the sight of a stranger. The reason of this is, that they fancy their deceased friends and relations to be only gone on a journey, and, being in constant expectation of their return, look for them vainly amongst these foreign travellers. —PICART'S *Ceremonies and Religious Customs.*

"J'ai passé moi-même," says Chateaubriand in his *Souvenirs d'Amerique*, "chez me peuplade Indienne qui se prenait à pleurer à la vue d'un voyageur, parce qu'il lui rappelai, des amis partis pour la Contrée des Ames, et depuis long-temps *en voyage*,"]

We saw thee, O stranger ! and wept.
We looked for the youth of the sunny glance
Whose step was the fleetest in chase or dance :
The light of his was a joy to see,
The path of his arrows a storm to flee.
But there came a voice from a distant shore—
He was called—he is found midst his tribe no more :
He is not in his place when the night-fires burn,
But we look for him still—he will yet return !
His brother sat with a drooping brow
In the gloom of the shadowing cypress bough :
We roused him—we bade him no longer pine,
For we heard a step—but the step was thine !

We saw thee, O stranger ! and wept.
We looked for the maid of the mournful song—
Mournful, though sweet,—she hath left us long :
We told her the youth of her love was gone,
And she went forth to seek him—she passed alone.
We hear not her voice when the woods are still,
From the bower where it sang, like a silvery rill.
The joy of her sire with her smile is fled,
The winter is white on his lonely head :

To say, if a wish or a vain regret
Could live in Elysian bowers,
'Twould be for the friends they can ne'er forget,
The beloved of their youthful hours.

To whisper the dear deserted band,
Who smiled on their tarriance here,
That a faithful guard in the dreamless land
Are the friends they have loved so dear.

'Tis true, in the silent night you call,
And they answer you not again ;
But the spirits of bliss are voiceless all—
Sound only was made for pain.

That their land is bright and they weep no more,
I have warbled from hill to hill ;
But my plaintive strain should have told before,
That they love, oh ! they love you still.

They bid me say that unfading flowers
You'll find in the path they trode ;
And a welcome true to their deathless bowers,
Pronounced by the voice of God.

He hath none by his side when the wilds we track,
He hath none when we rest—yet she comes not back!
We looked for her eye on the feast to shine,
For her breezy step—but the step was thine!

We saw thee, O stranger! and wept.
We looked for the chief, who hath left the spear
And the bow of his battles forgotten here:
We looked for the hunter, whose bride's lament
On the wind of the forest at eve is sent:
We looked for the first-born, whose mother's cry
Sounds wild and shrill through the midnight sky!—
Where are they? Thou'rt seeking some distant coast,
Oh ask of them, stranger!—send back the lost!
Tell them we mourn by the dark-blue streams,
Tell them our lives but of them are dreams!
Tell, how we sat in the gloom to pine,
And to watch for a step—but the step was thine!

THE ISLE OF FOUNTS.

AN INDIAN TRADITION.

"The river of St. Mary has its source from a vast lake or marsh, which lies between Flint and Oakmulge rivers, and occupies a space of near three hundred miles in circuit. This vast accumulation of waters, in the wet season, appears as a lake, and contains some large islands or knolls of rich high land; one of which the present generation of the Creek Indians represent to be a most blissful spot of earth. They say it is inhabited by a peculiar race of Indians, whose women are incomparably beautiful. They also tell you that this terrestrial paradise has been seen by some of their enterprising hunters, when in pursuit of game; but that in their endeavors to approach it, they were involved in perpetual labyrinths, and, like enchanted land, still as they imagined they had just gained it, it seemed to fly before them, alternately appearing and disappearing. They resolved at length to leave the delusive pursuit, and to return; which, after a number of difficulties, they effected. When they reported their adventures to their countrymen, the young warriors were inflamed with an irresistible desire to invade and make a conquest of so charming a country; but all their attempts have hitherto proved abortive, never having been able again to find that enchanting spot."—BERTRAM'S *Travels through North and South Carolina*..

The additional circumstances in the "Isle of Founts are merely imaginary.]

Son of the stranger! wouldst thou take
O'er you blue hills thy lonely way,
To reach the still and shining lake
Along whose banks the west winds play?
Let no vain dreams thy heart beguile—
Oh! seek thou not the Fountain Isle!

Lull but the mighty serpent-king,[1]
Midst the gray rocks, his old domain;
Ward but the cougar's deadly spring—
Thy step that lake's green shore may gain;
And the bright Isle when all is passed,
Shall vainly meet thine eye at last!

[1] The Cherokees believe that the recesses of their mountains, overgrown with lofty pines and cedars, and covered with old mossy rocks, are inhabited by the kings or chiefs of rattlesnakes, whom they denominate the "bright old inhabitants." They represent them as snakes of an enormous size, and which possess the power of drawing to them every living creature that comes within the reach of their eyes. Their heads are said to be crowned with a carbuncle of dazzing brightness.—See *Notes to* LEYDEN'S *Scenes of Infancy*.

Yes! there, with all its rainbow streams,
Clear as within thine arrow's flight,
The Isle of Founts, the isle of dreams,
Floats on the wave in golden light:
And lovely will the shadows be
Of groves whose fruit is not for thee!

And breathings from their sunny flowers,
Which are not of the things that die,
And singing voices from their bowers,
Shall greet thee in the purple sky;
Soft voices, e'en like those that dwell
Far in the green reed's hollow cell.

Or hast thou heard the sounds that rise
From the deep chambers of the earth?
The wild and wondrous melodies
To which the ancient rocks gave birth?[1]
Like that sweet song of hidden caves
Shall swell those wood-notes o'er the waves.

The emerald waves!—they take their hue
And image from that sunbright shore;
But wouldst thou launch thy light canoe,
And wouldst thou ply thy rapid oar,—
Before thee, hadst thou morning's speed,
The dreamy land should still recede!

Yet on the breeze thou still wouldst hear
The music of its flowering shades,
And ever should the sound be near
Of founts that ripple through its glades;
The sound, and sight, and flashing ray
Of joyous waters in their play!

But woe to him that sees them burst
With their bright spray-showers to the lake!
Earth has no spring to quench the thirst
That semblance in his soul shall wake,
Forever pouring through his dreams
The gush of those untasted streams!

Bright, bright in many a rocky urn,
The waters of our deserts lie,
Yet at their source his lips shall burn,
Parched with the fever's agony!
From the blue mountains to the main,
Our thousand floods may roll in vain.

E'en thus our hunters came of yore
Back from their long and weary quest;—
Had they not seen the untrodden shore?
And could they midst our wilds find rest?
The lightning of their glance was fled,
They dwelt amongst us as the dead!

They lay beside our glittering rills
With visions in their darkened eye;
Their joy was not amidst the hills
Where elk and deer before us fly:
Their spears upon the cedar hung,
Their javelins to the wind were flung.

They bent no more the forest bow,
They armed not with the warrior band,

[1] The stones on the banks of the Orono-co, called by the South American missionaries *Laxas de Musica*, and alluded to in a former note.

The moons waned o'er them dim and slow—
They left us for the spirits' land!
Beneath our pines yon greenward heap [sleep.
Shows where the restless found their

Son of the stranger! if at eve
Silence be 'midst us in thy place,
Yet go not where the mighty leave
The strength of battle and of chase!
Let no vain dreams thy heart beguile—
Oh! seek thou not the Fountain Isle!

THE BENDED BOW.

[It is supposed that war was anciently proclaimed in Britain by sending messengers in different directions through the land, each bearing a *bended bow*; and that peace was in like manner announced by a bow unstrung, and therefore straight.—See the *Cambrian Antiquities.*]

THERE was heard the sound of a coming foe,
There was sent through Britain a bended bow;
And a voice was poured on the free winds far,
As the land rose up at the sign of war.

"Heard you not the battle-horn?—
Reaper! leave thy golden corn:
Leave it for the birds of heaven—
Swords must flash and spears be riven!
Leave it for the winds to shed—
Arm! ere Britain's turf grow red."

And the reaper armed, like a free-man's son;
And the bended bow and the voice passed on.

"Hunter! leave the mountain-chase,
Take the falchion from its place;
Let the wolf go free to-day,
Leave him for a nobler prey;
Let the deer ungalled sweep by—
Arm thee! Britain's foes are nigh!"

And the hunter armed ere the chase was done;
And the bended bow and the voice passed on.

"Chieftain! quit the joyous feast—
Stay not till the song hath ceased:
Though the mead be foaming bright,
Though the fires give ruddy light,
Leave the hearth, and leave the hall—
Arm thee! Britain's foes must fall."

And the chieftain armed, and the horn was blown;
And the bended bow and the voice passed on.

"Prince! thy father's deeds are told
In the bower and in the hold,
Where the goatherd's lay is sung
Where the minstrel's harp is strung!
Foes are on thy native sea—
Give our bards a tale of thee!"

And the prince came armed, like a leader's son;
And the bended bow and the voice passed on.

"Mother! stay thou not thy boy,
He must learn the battle's joy:
Sister! bring the sword and spear,
Give thy brother words of cheer:
Maiden! bid thy lover part:
Britain calls the strong in heart!"

And the bended bow and the voice passed on,
And the bards made song for a battle won.

HE NEVER SMILED AGAIN.

[It is recorded of Henry the First, that after the death of his son, Prince William, who perished in a shipwreck off the coast of Normandy, he was never seen to smile.]

THE bark that held a prince went down,
The sweeping waves rolled on;
And what was England's glorious crown
To him that wept a son?
He lived—for life may long be borne
Ere sorrow break its chain;
Why comes not death to those who mourn?
He never smiled again!

There stood proud forms around his throne,
The stately and the brave;
But which could fill the place of one,
That one beneath the wave?
Before him passed the young and fair,
In pleasure's reckless train;
But seas dashed o'er his son's bright hair—
He never smiled again!

He sat where festal bowls went round,
He heard the minstrel sing,
He saw the tourney's victor crowned
Amidst the knightly ring:
A murmur of the restless deep
Was blent with every strain,
A voice of winds that would not sleep—
He never smiled again!

Hearts, in that time, closed o'er the trace
Of vows once fondly poured,
And strangers took the kinsman's place
At many a joyous board;
Graves, which true love had bathed with tears,
Were left to heaven's bright rain,
Fresh hopes were born for other years
He never smiled again!

CŒUR-DE-LION AT THE BIER OF HIS FATHER.

[The body of Henry the Second lay in state in the abbey-church of Fontevraud, where it was visited by Richard Cœur-de-Lion, who on beholding it, was struck with horror and remorse, and bitterly reproached himself for that rebellious conduct which had been the means of bringing his father to an untimely grave.]

TORCHES were blazing clear,
Hymns pealing deep and slow,
Where a king lay stately on his bier
In the church of Fontevraud.
Banners of battle o'er him hung,
And warriors slept beneath;
And light, as noon's broad light, was flung
On the settled face of death.

On the settled face of death
A strong and ruddy glare,
Though dimmed at times by the censer's breath,
Yet it fell still brightest there:
As if each deeply furrowed trace
Of earthly years to show.
Alas! that sceptred mortal's race
Had surely closed in woe!

The marble floor was swept
By many a long dark stole,
As the kneeling priests round him that slept
Sang mass for the parted soul :
And solemn were the strains they poured
Through the stillness of the night,
With the cross above, and the crown and sword,
And the silent king in sight.

There was heard a heavy clang,
As of steel-girt men that tread,
And the tombs and the hollow pavement rang
With a sounding thrill of dread ;
And the holy chant was hushed awhile,
As, by the torch's flame,
A gleam of arms up the sweeping aisle
With a mail-clad leader came.

He came with haughty look,
An eagle-glance and clear ;
But his proud heart through its breast-plate shook
When he stood beside the bier !
He stood there still with a drooping brow,
And clasped hands o'er it raised
For his father lay before him low—
It was Cœur-de-Lion gazed !

And silently he strove
With the workings of his breast,
But there's more in late repentant love
Than steel may keep suppressed,
And his tears brake forth, at last, like rain,—
Men held their breath in awe ;
For his face was seen by his warrior train,
And he recked not that they saw.

He looked upon the dead—
And sorrow seemed to lie,
A weight of sorrow, even like lead,
Pale on the fast-shut eye.
He stooped—and kissed the frozen cheek,
And the heavy hand of clay ;
Till bursting words—yet all too weak—
Gave his soul's passion way.

"O father ! is it vain,
This late remorse and deep ?
Speak to me, father ! once again :
I weep—behold, I weep !
Alas ! my guilty pride and ire !—
Were but this work undone,
I would give England's crown, my sire !
To hear thee bless thy son.

"Speak to me ! Mighty grief
Ere now the dust hath stirred !
Hear me, but hear me !—father, chief,
My king ! I *must* be heard !
Hushed, hushed—how is it that I call,
And that thou answerest not ?
When was it thus ?—Woe, woe for all
The love my soul forgot !

"Thy silver hairs I see,
So still, so sadly bright !
And father, father ! but for me,
They had not been so white !
I bore thee down, high heart ! at last :
No longer couldst thou strive.
Oh ! for one moment of the past,
To kneel and say—'forgive !'

"Thou wert the noblest king
On royal throne e'er seen ;
And thou didst wear in knightly ring,
Of all, the stateliest mien ;
And thou didst prove, where spears are proved,
In war, the bravest heart :
Oh ! ever the renowned and loved
Thou wert—and *there* thou art !

"Thou that my boyhood's guide
Didst take fond joy to be !—
The times I've sported at thy side,
And climbed thy parent knee !
And there before the blessed shrine,
My sire ! I see thee lie,—
How will that sad still face of thine
Look on me till I die !"

THE VASSAL'S LAMENT FOR THE FALLEN TREE.

[Here (at Brereton, in Cheshire) is one thing incredibly strange, but attested, as I myself have heard, by many persons, and commonly believed. Before any heir of this family dies, there are seen, in a lake adjoining, the bodies of trees swimming on the water for several days.—CAMDEN'S *Britannia.*]

YES! I have seen the ancient oak
On the dark deep water cast,
And it was not felled by the woodman's stroke,
Or the rush of the sweeping blast;
For the axe might never touch that tree,
And the air was still as a summer sea.

I saw it fall, as falls a chief
By an arrow in the fight,
And the old woods shook to their loftiest leaf,
At the crashing of its might;
And the startled deer to their coverts drew,
And the spray of the lake as a fountain's flew!

'Tis fallen! But think thou not I weep
For the forest's pride o'erthrown—
An old man's tears lie far too deep
To be poured for this alone;
But by that sign too well I know,
That a youthful head, must soon be low!

A youthful head, with its shining hair,
And its bright quick-flashing eye—
Well may I weep! for the boy is fair,
Too fair a thing to die!
But on his brow the mark is set—
Oh! could *my* life redeem him yet!

He bounded by me as I gazed
Alone on the fatal sign,
And it seemed like sunshine when he raised
His joyous glance to mine.
With a stag's fleet step he bounded by,
So full of life—but he must die!

He must, he must! in that deep dell
By that dark water's side,
'Tis known that ne'er a proud tree fell
But an heir of his fathers' died.
And he—there's laughter in his eye,
Joy in his voice—yet he must die!

I've borne him in these arms, that now
Are nerveless and unstrung;
And must I see, on that fair brow,
The dust untimely flung?
I must!—yon green oak, branch and crest,
Lies floating on the dark lake's breast

The noble boy!—how proudly sprung
The falcon from his hand!
It seemed like youth to see *him* young,
A flower in his father's land!
But the hour of the knell and the dirge is nigh,
For the tree had fallen, and the flower must die.

Say not 'tis vain! I tell thee, some
Are warned by a meteor's light,
Or a pale bird, flitting, calls them home,
Or a voice on the winds by night;
And they must go! And he too, he!—
Woe for the fall of the glorious Tree!

THE WILD HUNTSMAN.

(It is a popular belief in the Odenwald, that the passing of the Wild Huntsman announces the approach of war. He is supposed to issue with his train from the ruined castle of Rodenstein, and traverse the air to the opposite castle of Schnellerts. It is confidently asserted, that the sound of his phantom horses and hounds was heard by the Duke of Baden before the commencement of the second war in Germany.

THY rest was deep at the slumberer's hour,
If thou didst not hear the blast
Of the savage horn from the mountain-tower,
As the Wild Night-Huntsman passed,
And the roar of the stormy chase went by
Through the dark unquiet sky !

The stag sprung up from his mossy bed
When he caught the piercing sounds,
And the oak-boughs crashed to his antlered head,
As he flew from the viewless hounds ;
And the falcon soared from her craggy height,
Away through the rushing night !

The banner shook on its ancient hold !
And the pine in its desert place,
As the cloud and tempest onward rolled
With the din of the trampling race ;
And the glens were filled with the laugh and shout,
And the bugle, ringing out !

From the chieftain's hand the wine-cup fell,
At the castle's festive board,
And a sudden pause came o'er the swell
Of the harp's triumphant chord ;
And the Minnesinger's[1] thrilling lay
In the hall died fast away.

The convent's chanted rite was stayed,
And the hermit dropped his beads,
And a trembling ran through the forest-shade,
At the neigh of the phantom steeds,
And the church-bells pealed to the rocking blast
As the Wild Night-Huntsman passed.

The storm hath swept with the chase away,
There is stillness in the sky ;
But the mother looks on her son to-day
With a troubled heart and eye,
And the maiden's brow hath a shade of care
Midst the gleam of her golden hair !

The Rhine flows bright ; but its waves ere long
Must hear a voice of war,
And the clash of spears our hills among,
And a trumpet from afar ;
And the brave on a bloody turf must lie—
For the Huntsman hath gone by !

[1] Minnesinger, *love-singer*—the wandering minstrels of Germany were so called in the middle ages.

BRANDENBURG HARVEST SONG.[1]

FROM THE GERMAN OF LA MOTTE FOUQUE.

THE corn in golden light
Waves o'er the plain ;
The sickle's gleam is bright ;
Full swells the grain.

Now send we far around
Our harvest lay !—
Alas ! a heavier sound
Comes o'er the day !

Earth shrouds with burial sod
Her soft eyes blue,—
Now o'er the gifts of God
Fall tears like dew !

On every breeze a knell
The hamlets pour :
We know its cause too well—
She is no more !

THE SHADE OF THESEUS.

AN ANCIENT GREEK TRADITION.

KNOW ye not when our dead
From sleep to battle sprung ?—
When the Persian charger's tread
On their covering greensward rung.
When the trampling march of foes
Had crushed our vines and flowers,
When jewelled crests arose
Through the holy laurel bowers ;

When banners caught the breeze,
When helms in sunlight shone,
When masts were on the seas,
And spears on Marathon.

There was one, a leader crowned,
And armed for Greece that day ;
But the falchions made no sound
On his gleaming war-array.
In the battle's front he stood,
With his tall and shadowy crest ;
But the arrows drew no blood,
Though their path was through his breast.

When banners caught the breeze,
When helms in sunlight shone,
When masts were on the seas,
And spears on Marathon.

His sword was seen to flash
Where the boldest deeds were done !
But it smote without a clash—
The stroke was heard by none !
His voice was not of those
That swelled the rolling blast,
And his steps fell hushed like snows—
'Twas the Shade of Theseus passed !

When banners caught the breeze,
When helms in sunlight shone,
When masts were on the seas,
And spears on Marathon.

Far sweeping through the foe,
With a fiery charge he bore ;
And the Mede left many a bow
On the sounding ocean-shore.
And the foaming waves grew red,
And the sails were crowded fast,
When the sons of Asia fled,
As the Shade of Theseus passed !

When banners caught the breeze,
When helms in sunlight shone,
When masts were on the seas,
And spears on Marathon.

[1] For the year of the Queen of Prussia's death.

ANCIENT GREEK SONG OF EXILE.

Where is the summer with her golden sun?—
That festal glory hath not passed from earth:
For me alone the laughing day is done!
Where is the summer with her voice of mirth
—Far in my own bright land!

Where are the Fauns, whose flute-notes breathe and die
On the green hills?—the founts, from sparry caves
Through the wild places bearing melody?—
The reeds, low whispering o'er the river waves?
—Far in my own bright land?

Where are the temples, through the dim wood shining,
The virgin dances, and the choral strains?
Where the sweet sisters of my youth entwining
The spring's first roses for their sylvan fanes?
—Far in my own bright land!

Where are the vineyards, with their joyous throngs
The red grapes pressing when the foliage fades?
The lyres, the wreaths, the lovely Dorian songs,
And the pine forests, and the olive shades?
—Far in my own bright land!

Where the deep haunted grots, the laurel bowers,
The Dryad's footsteps, and the minstrel's dreams?—
Oh, that my life were as a southern flower's!—
I might not languish then by these chill streams,
—Far from my own bright land!

GREEK FUNERAL CHANT, OR MYRIOLOGUE.

[Les Chants Funèbres par lesquels on déplore en Grèce la mort de ses proches, prennent le nom particulier de Myriologia—comme qui dirait, Discours de lamentation, complaintes. Un malade vient-il de rendre le dernier soupir, sa femme, sa mère, ses filles, ses sœurs, celles, en un mot, de ses plus proches parentes qui sont là, lui ferment les yeux et la bouche, en épanchant librement, chacune selon son naturel et sa mesure de tendresse pour le défunt, la douleur qu'elle ressent de sa perte. Ce premier devoir rempli, elles se retirent toutes chez une de leurs parentes ou de leurs amies. Lá elles changent de vêtemens, s'habillent de blanc, comme pour la cérémonie nuptiale, avec cette diffréence, qu'elles garden la tête nue, les cheveux épars et pendants. Ces apprêts terminés, les parentes reviennent dans leur parure de deuil; toutes se ran gent en cercle autour du mort, et leur douleur s'exhale de nouveau, et comme la primière fois, sans règle et sans contrainte. A ces plaintes spontanées succèdent bientôt des lamentations d'une autre espèce: ce sont les *Myriologues*. Ordinairement c'est la plus proche parente qui prononce le sien la première; après elle les autres parentes, les amies, les simples voisines. Les Myriologues sont toujours composés et chantés par les femmes. Ils sont toujours improvisés, toujours en vers, et toujours chantes, sur un air qui diffère d'un lieu à un autre, mais qui dans un lieu donné, reste invariablement consacré à ce genre de poësie."—*Chants Populaires de la Grèce Moderne, par* C. Fauriel.]

A wail was heard around the bed, the deathbed of the young—
Amidst her tears the Funeral Chant a mournful mother sung:
"Ianthis! dost thou sleep? Thou sleepest! but this is not the rest,
The breathing and the rosy calm, I have pillowed on my breast?

I lulled thee not to *this* repose, Ianthis ! my sweet son !
As, in thy glowing childhood's time, by twilight I have done.
How is it that I bear to stand and look upon thee now ?
And that I die not, seeking death on thy pale glorious brow ?

"I look upon thee, thou that wert of all most fair and brave !
I see thee wearing still too much of beauty for the grave.
Though mournfully thy smile is fixed, and heavily thine eye
Hath shut above the falcon-glance that in it loved to lie ;
And fast is bound the springing step, that seemed on breezes borne,
When to thy couch I came and said,—'Wake, hunter, wake ! 'tis morn !'
Yet art thou lovely still, my flower ! untouched by slow decay,—
And I, the withered stem, remain. I would that grief might slay !

"Oh ! ever, when I met thy look, I knew that *this* would be !
I knew too well that length of days was not a gift for thee !
I saw it in thy kindling cheek, and in thy bearing high ;—
A voice came whispering to my soul, and told me thou must die !
That thou must die, my fearless one ! where swords were flashing red.—
Why doth a mother live to say—My first-born and my dead !
They tell me of thy youthful fame, they talk of victory won :
Speak *thou*, and I will hear, my child ! Ianthis ! my sweet son !"

A wail was heard around the bed, the deathbed of the young—
A fair-haired bride the Funeral Chant amidst her weeping sung :—
"Ianthis ! lookest thou not on *me?* Can love indeed be fled ?
When was it woe before to gaze upon thy stately head ?
I would that I had followed thee, Ianthis, my beloved !
And stood as woman oft hath stood where faithful hearts are proved;
That I had bound a breastplate on, and battled at thy side !—
It would have been a blessed thing together had we died !

"But where was I when thou didst fall beneath the fatal sword ?
Was I beside the sparkling fount, or at the peaceful board ?
Or singing some sweet song of old, in the shadow of the vine,
Or praying to the saints for thee, before the holy shrine ?
And thou wert lying low the while, the life-drops from thy heart
Fast gushing, like a mountain spring ? And couldst thou thus depart ?
Couldst thou depart, nor on my lips pour out thy fleeting breath ?—
Oh ! I was with thee but in joy, that shouldst have been in death !

"Yes ! I was with thee when the dance through mazy rings was led,
And when the lyre and voice were tuned, and when the feast was spread ;
But not where noble blood flowed forth, where sounding javelins flew—
Why did I hear love's first sweet words, and not its last adieu ?
What now can breathe of gladness more,—what scene, what hour, what tone ?
The blue skies fade with all their lights ; they fade, since thou art gone !
Even *that* must leave me, that still face, by all my tears unmoved :
Take me from this dark world with thee, Ianthis ! my beloved !"

A wail was heard around the bed, the deathbed of the young—
Amidst her tears the Funeral Chant a mournful sister sung :—
"Ianthis ! brother of my soul !—oh ! where are now the days
That laughed among the deep-green hills, on all our infant plays ?

When we two sported by the streams, or tracked them to their source,
And like the stag's, the rocks along, was thy fleet, fearless course !—
I see the pines there waving yet, I see the rills descend,
But see thy bounding step no more—my brother and my friend !

"I come with flowers—for spring is come ! Ianthis art thou *here ?*
I bring the garlands she hath brought, I cast them on thy bier.
Thou shouldst be crowned with victory's crown—but oh ! more meet *they* seem
The first faint violets of the wood, and lilies of the stream—
More meet for one so fondly loved, and laid thus early low.
Alas ! how sadly sleeps thy face amidst the sunshine's glow—
The golden glow that through thy heart was wont such joy to send :
Woe ! that it smiles, and not for thee !—my brother and my friend !"

GREEK PARTING SONG.

[This piece is founded on a tale related by Fauriel, in his "Chansons Populaires de la Grèce Moderne," and accompanied by some very interesting particulars respecting the extempore parting songs, or songs of expatriation, as he informs us, they are called, in which the modern Greeks are accustomed to pour forth their feelings on bidding farewell to their country and friends.]

A YOUTH went forth to exile, from a home
Such as to early thought gives images,
The longest treasured, and most oft recalled,
And brightest, kept of love ;—a mountain home,
That, with the murmur of its rocking pines,
And sounding waters, first in childhood's heart
Wakes the deep sense of nature unto joy,
And half-unconscious prayer ;—a Grecian home,
With the transparence of blue skies o'erhung,
And, through the dimness of its olive shades,
Catching the flash of fountains, and the gleam
Of shining pillars from the fanes of old.
And this was what he left ! Yet many leave
Far more—the glistening eye, that first from theirs
Called out the soul's bright smile ; the gentle hand,
Which through the sunshine led forth infant steps
To where the violets lay ; the tender voice
That earliest taught them what deep melody
Lives in affection's tones. *He* left not these.
Happy the weeper, that but weeps to part
With all a mother's love ! A bitter grief
Was his—to part *unloved !*—of her unloved
That should have breathed upon his heart, like spring
Fostering its young faint flowers !
Yet had he friends,
And they went forth to cheer him on his way
Unto the parting spot, and she too went,
That mother, tearless for her youngest-born.
The parting spot was reached—a lone deep glen,

Holy, perchance, of yore ; for cave and fount
Were there, and sweet-voiced echoes ; and above,
The silence of the blue still upper heaven
Hung round the crags of Pindus, where they wore
Their crowning snows. Upon a rock he sprung,
The unbeloved one, for his home to gaze
Through the wild laurels back ; but then a light
Broke on the stern proud sadness of his eye,
A sudden quivering light, and from his lips
A burst of passionate song.

"Farewell, farewell !
I hear thee, O thou rushing stream !—thou'rt from my native dell,
Thou'rt bearing thence a mournful sound—a murmur of farewell !
And fare *thee* well—flow on, my stream !—flow on, thou bright and free !
I do but dream that in thy voice one tone laments for me ;
But I have been a thing unloved from childhood's loving years,
And therefore turns my soul to thee, for thou hast known my tears !
The mountains, and the caves, and thou, my secret tears have known :
The woods can tell where *he* wept, that ever wept alone !

"I see thee once again, my home ! thou'rt there amidst thy vines,
And clear upon thy gleaming roof the light of summer shines
It is a joyous hour when eve comes whispering through thy groves—
The hour that brings the son from toil, the hour the mother loves.
The hour *the mother* loves !—for *me* beloved it hath not been ;
Yet ever in its purple smile, *thou* smilest, a blessed scene !
Whose quiet beauty o'er my soul through distant years will come—
Yet what but as the dead, to thee, shall I be then, my home ?

"Not as the dead !—no, not the dead ! We speak of *them*—we keep
Their names, like light that must not fade, within our bosoms deep .
We hallow even the lyre they touched, we love the lay they sung,
We pass with softer step the place *they* filled our band among !
But I depart like sound, like dew, like aught that leaves on earth
No trace of sorrow or delight, no memory of its birth !
I go !—the echo of the rock a thousand songs may swell
When mine is a forgotten voice. Woods, mountains, home, farewell !

"And farewell, mother ! I have borne in lonely silence long,
But now the current of my soul grows passionate and strong ;
And I will speak ! though but the wind that wanders through the sky,
And but the dark, deep-rustling pines and rolling streams reply.
Yes ! I will speak ! Within my breast, whate'er hath seemed to be,
There lay a hidden fount of love that would have gushed for thee !
Brightly it would have gushed—but thou, my mother ! thou hast thrown
Back on the forests and the wilds, what should have been thine own !

"Then fare thee well ! I leave thee not in loneliness to pine,
Since thou hast sons of statelier mien and fairer brow than mine.
Forgive me that thou couldst not love !—it may be that a tone
Yet from my burning heart may pierce through thine, when I am gone ;

And thou, perchance, mayst weep for him on whom thou ne'er hast smiled,
And the grave give his birthright back to thy neglected child !
Might but my spirit *then* return, and midst its kindred dwell,
And quench its thirst with love's free tears ! 'Tis all a dream—farewell ! "

" Farewell ! "—the echo died with that deep word ;
Yet died not so the late repentant pang
By the strain quickened in the mother's breast !
There had passed many changes o'er her brow,
And cheek, and eye ; but into one bright flood
Of tears at last all melted ; and she fell
On the glad bosom of her child, and cried,
" Return, return, my son ! " The echo caught
A lovelier sound than song, and woke again,
Murmuring, " Return, my son ! "

THE SULIOTE MOTHER.

[It is related, in a French life of Ali Pasha, that several of the Suliote women, on the advance of the Turkish troops into the mountain fastnesses, assembled on a lofty summit, and, after chanting a wild song, precipitated themselves with their children, into the chasm below, to avoid becoming the slaves of the enemy.]

She stood upon the loftiest peak,
Amidst the clear blue sky ;
A bitter smile was on her cheek,
And a dark flash in her eye.

" Dost thou see them, boy ?—through the dusky pines
Dost thou see where the foeman's armor shines ?
Hast thou caught the gleam of the conqueror's crest ?
My babe, that I cradled on my breast !
Wouldst thou spring from thy mother's arms with joy ?
—That sight hath cost thee a father, boy ! "

For in the rocky strait beneath,
Lay Suliote sire and son :
They had heaped high the piles of death
Before the pass was won.

" They have crossed the torrent, and on they come :
Woe for the mountain hearth and home !
There, where the hunter laid by his spear,
There, where the lyre hath been sweet to hear,
There, where I sang thee, fair babe ! to sleep,
Naught but the blood-stain our trace shall keep ! "

And now the horn's loud blast was heard,
And now the cymbal's clang,
Till even the upper air was stirred,
As cliff and hollow rang.

"Hark! they bring music, my joyous child!
What saith the trumpet to Suli's wild?
Doth it light thine eye with so quick a fire,
As if at a glance of thine armèd sire?
Still!—be thou still!—there are brave men low:
Thou wouldst not smile couldst thou see him now!"

But nearer came the clash of steel,
And louder swelled the horn,
And farther yet the tambour's peal
Through the dark pass was borne.

"Hear'st thou the sound of their savage mirth?
Boy! thou wert free when I gave thee birth,—
Free, and how cherished, my warrior's son!
He too hath blessed thee, as I have done!
Ay, unchained must his loved ones be—
Freedom, young Suliote! for thee and me!"

And from the arrowy peak she sprung,
And fast the fair child bore:—
A veil upon the wind was flung,
A cry—and all was o'er!

THE FAREWELL TO THE DEAD.

[The following piece is founded on a beautiful part of the Greek funeral service, in which relatives and friends are invited to embrace the deceased (whose face is uncovered) and to bid their final adieu.—See *Christian Researches in the Mediterranean.*]

"Tis hard to lay into the earth
A countenance so benign! a form that walked
But yesterday so stately o'er the earth!"—WILSON.

COME near! Ere yet the dust
Soil the bright paleness of the settled brow,
Look on your brother; and embrace him now,
In still and solemn trust!
Come near!—once more let kindred lips be pressed
On his cold cheek; then bear him to his rest!

Look yet on this young face !
What shall the beauty, from amongst us gone,
Leave of its image, even where most it shone,
Gladdening its hearth and race ?
Dim grows the semblance on man's heart impressed.
Come near, and bear the beautiful to rest !

Ye weep, and it is well !
For tears befit earth's partings ! Yesterday,
Song was upon the lips of this pale clay,
And sunshine seemed to dwell
Where'er he moved—the welcome and the blessed.
Now gaze ! and bear the silent unto rest !

Look yet on him whose eye
Meets yours no more, in sadness or in mirth.
Was he not fair amidst the sons of earth,
The beings born to die ?—
But not where death has power may love be blessed.
Come near ! and bear ye the beloved to rest !

How may the mother's heart
Dwell on her son, and dare to hope again ?
The spring's rich promise hath been given in vain—
The lovely must depart !
Is *he* not gone, our brightest and our best ?
Come near ! and bear the early called to rest !

Look on him ! Is he laid
To slumber from the harvest or the chase ?—
Too still and sad the smile upon his face ;
Yet that, even that must fade :
Death holds not long unchanged his fairest guest.
Come near ! and bear the mortal to his rest !

His voice of mirth hath ceased
Amidst the vineyards ! there is left no place
For him whose dust receives your vain embrace,
At the gay bridal-feast !
Earth must take earth to moulder on her breast.
Come near ! weep o'er him ! bear him to his rest.

Yet mourn ye not as they
Whose spirit's light is quenched ! For him the past
Is sealed : he may not fall, he may not cast
His birthright's hope away !
All is not *here* of our beloved and blessed.
Leave ye the sleeper with his God to rest !

RECORDS OF WOMAN.

ARABELLA STUART.

["The Lady Arabella" as she has been frequently entitled, was descended from Margaret, eldest daughter of Henry VII., and consequently allied by birth to Elizabeth as well as James I. This affinity to the throne proved the misfortune of her life, as the jealousies which it constantly excited in her royal relatives, who were anxious to prevent her marrying, shut her out from the enjoyment of that domestic happiness which her heart appears to have so fervently desired. By a secret but early-discovered union with William Seymour, son of Lord Beauchamp, she alarmed the cabinet of James, and the wedded lovers were immediately placed in separate confinement. From this they found means to concert a romantic plan of escape; and having won over a female attendant, by whose assistance she was disguised in male attire, Arabella, though faint from recent sickness and suffering, stole out in the night, and at last reached an appointed spot, where a boat and servants were in waiting. She embarked; and at break of day a French vessel engaged to receive her was discovered and gained. As Seymour, however, had not arrived, she was desirous that the vessel should lie at anchor for him; but this wish was overruled by her companions, who, contrary to her entreaties, hoisted sail, "which," says D'Israeli, "occasioned so fatal a termination to this romantic adventure. Seymour, indeed, had escaped from the Tower; he reached the wharf, and found his confidential man waiting with a boat, and arrived at Lee. The time passed; the waves were rising; Arabella was not there; but in the distance he descried a vessel. Hiring a fisherman to take him on board, he discovered, to his grief, on hailing it, that it was not the French ship charged with his Arabella; in despair and confusion he found another ship from Newcastle, which for a large sum altered its course, and landed him in Flanders." Arabella, meantime, whilst imploring her attendants to linger, and earnestly looking out for the expected boat of her husband, was overtaken in Calais Roads by a vessel in the king's service, and brought back to a captivity, under the suffering of which her mind and constitution gradually sank. "What passed in that dreadful imprisonment cannot perhaps be recovered for authentic history, but enough is known—that her mind grew impaired, that she finally lost her reason, and, if the duration of her imprisonment was short, that it was only terminated by her death. Some effusions, often begun and never ended, written and erased, incoherent and rational, yet remain among her papers."—*D'Israeli's Curiosities of Literature.*

The following poem, meant as some record of her fate, and the imagined fluctuations of her thoughts and feelings, is supposed to commence during the time of her first imprisonment, whilst her mind was yet buoyed up by the consciousness of Seymour's affection, and the cherished hope of eventual deliverance.]

"And is not love in vain,
Torture enough without a living tomb?"
Byron.

"Fermossi al fin il cor che balzò tanto."
Pindemonte.

I.

'Twas but a dream! I saw the stag leap free,
Under the boughs where early birds were singing;
I stood o'ershadowed by the greenwood tree,
And heard, it seemed, a sudden bugle ringing
Far through a royal forest. Then the fawn
Shot like a gleam of light, from grassy lawn
To secret covert; and the smooth turf shook,
And lilies quivered by the glade's lone brook,
And young leaves trembled, as, in fleet career,
A princely band, with horn, and hound, and spear,
Like a rich masque swept forth. I saw the dance
Of their white plumes, that bore a silvery glance

Into the deep wood's heart ; and all passed by
Save one—I met the smile of *one* clear eye,
Flashing out joy to mine. Yes, *thou* wert there,
Seymour ! A soft wind blew the clustering hair
Back from thy gallant brow, as thou didst rein
Thy courser, turning from that gorgeous train,
And fling, methought, thy hunting spear away,
And, lightly graceful in thy green array,
Bound to my side. And we, that met and parted
Even in dread of some dark watchful power,
Won back to childhood's trust, and fearless-hearted,
Blent the glad fulness of our thoughts that hour
Even like the mingling of sweet streams, beneath
Dim woven leaves, and midst the floating breath
Of hidden forest-flowers.

II.

'Tis past ! I wake,
A captive, and alone, and far from thee,
My love and friend ! Yet fostering for thy sake,
A quenchless hope of happiness to be ;
And feeling still my woman-spirit strong,
In the deep faith which lifts from earthly wrong
A heavenward glance. I know, I know our love
Shall yet call gentle angels from above,
By its undying fervor, and prevail—
Sending a breath, as of the spring's first gale,
Through hearts now cold ; and, raising its bright face,
With a free gush of sunny tears, erase
The characters of anguish. In this trust,
I bear, I strive, I bow not to the dust,
That I may bring thee back no faded form,
No bosom chilled and blighted by the storm,
But all my youth's first treasures, when we meet,
Making past sorrow, by communion, sweet.

III.

And thou too art in bonds ! Yet droop thou not,
O my beloved ! there is *one* hopeless lot,
But one, and that not ours. Beside the dead
There sits the grief that mantles up its head,
Loathing the laughter and proud pomp of light,
When darkness, from the vainly doting sight
Covers its beautiful ! If thou wert gone
To the grave's bosom, with thy radiant brow—
If thy deep-thrilling voice, with that low tone
Of earnest tenderness, which now, even now
Seems floating through my soul, were music taken
Forever from this world—oh ! thus forsaken
Could I bear on ? Thou livest, thou livest, thou'rt mine !
With this glad thought I make my heart a shrine,
And by the lamp which quenchless there shall burn,
Sit a lone watcher for the day's return.

IV.

And lo ! the joy that cometh with the morning,
Brightly victorious o'er the hours of care !
I have not watched in vain, serenely scorning
The wild and busy whispers of despair !
Thou hast sent tidings, as of heaven—I wait
The hour, the sign, for blessèd flight to thee.
Oh ! for the skylark's wing that seeks its mate
As a star shoots !—but on the breezy sea
We shall meet soon. To think of such an hour
Will not my heart, o'erburdened by its bliss,
Faint and give way within me, as a flower
Borne down and perishing by noontide's kiss?
Yet shall I *fear* that lot—the perfect rest,
The full deep joy of dying on thy breast,
After long suffering won ? So rich a close
Too seldom crowns with peace affection's woes.

V.

Sunset ! I tell each moment. From the skies
The last red splendor floats along my wall,
Like a king's banner ! Now it melts, it dies !
I see one star—I hear—'twas not the call,
The expected voice ; my quick heart throbbed too soon.
I must keep vigil till yon rising moon
Showers down less golden light. Beneath her beam
Through my lone lattice poured, I sit and dream
Of summer-lands afar, where holy love,
Under the vine or in the citron grove,
May breathe from terror.

Now the night grows deep,
And silent as its clouds, and full of sleep.
I hear my veins beat. Hark ! a bell's slow chime !
My heart strikes with it. Yet again—'tis time !
A step !—a voice !—or but a rising breeze ?
Hark !—haste !—I come, to meet thee on the seas !
* * * * * * *

VI.

Now never more, oh ! never, in the worth
Of its pure cause, let sorrowing love on earth
Trust fondly—never more ! The hope is crushed,
That lit my life, the voice within me hushed
That spoke sweet oracles ; and I return
To lay my youth, as in a burial urn,
Where sunshine may not find it. All is lost !
No tempest met our barks—no billow tossed ;
Yet were they severed, even as we must be,
That so have loved, so striven our hearts to free
From their close-coiling fate ! In vain—in vain !
The dark links meet, and clasp themselves again,

And press out life. Upon the deck I stood
And a white sail came gliding o'er the flood,
Like some proud bird of ocean ; then mine eye
Strained out, one moment earlier to descry
The form it ached for, and the bark's career
Seemed slow to that fond yearning : it drew near
Fraught with our foes ! What boots it to recall
The strife, the tears ? Once more a prison wall
Shuts the green hills and woodlands from my sight,
And joyous glance of waters to the light,
And thee, my Seymour !—thee !

I will not sink.
Thou, *thou* hast rent the heavy chain that bound thee !
And this shall be my strength—the joy to think
That thou mayest wander with heaven's breath around thee
And all the laughing sky ! This thought shall yet
Shine o'er my heart a radiant amulet,
Guarding it from despair. Thy bonds are broken ;
And unto me, I know, thy true love's token
Shall one day be deliverance, though the years
Lie dim between, o'erhung with mists of tears.

VII.

My friend ! my friend ! where art thou ? Day by day,
Gliding like some dark mournful stream away,
My silent youth flows from me. Spring, the while,
Comes and rains beauty on the kindling boughs
Round hall and hamlet ; summer with her smile
Fills the green forest ; young hearts breathe their vows ;
Brothers long parted meet ; fair children rise
Round the glad board ; hope laughs from loving eyes :
All this is in the world !—These joys lie sown,
The dew of every path ! On *one* alone
Their freshness may not fall—the stricken deer
Dying of thirst with all the waters near.

VIII.

Ye are from dingle and fresh glade, ye flowers !
By some kind hand to cheer my dungeon sent ;
O'er you the oak shed down the summer showers,
And the lark's nest was where your bright cups bent,
Quivering to breeze and raindrop, like the sheen
Of twilight stars. On you heaven's eye hath been,
Through the leaves pouring its dark sultry blue
Into your glowing hearts ; the bee to you
Hath murmured, and the rill. My soul grows faint
With passionate yearning, as its quick dreams paint
Your haunts by dell and stream—the green, the free,
The full of all sweet sound—the shut from me !

IX.

There went a swift bird singing past my cell——
O Love and Freedom ! ye are lovely things !
With you the peasant on the hills may dwell,
And by the streams. But I—the blood of kings,
A proud unmingling river, through my veins
Flows in lone brightness, and its gifts are chains !
Kings !—I had silent visions of deep bliss,
Leaving their thrones far distant ; and for this
I am cast under their triumphal car,
An insect to be crushed ! Oh ! heaven is far—
Earth pitiless !

Dost thou forget me, Seymour ? I am proved
So long, so sternly ! Seymour, my beloved !
There are such tales of holy marvels done
By strong affection, of deliverance won
Through its prevailing power ! Are these things told
Till the young weep with rapture, and the old
Wonder, yet dare not doubt ; and thou ! oh, thou !
Dost thou forget me in my hope's decay ?—
Thou canst not ? Through the silent night, even now,
I, that need prayer so much, awake and pray
Still first for thee. O gentle, gentle friend !
How shall I bear this anguish to the end ?

Aid !—comes there yet no aid ? The voice of blood
Passes heaven's gate, even ere the crimson flood
Sinks through the greensward ! Is there not a cry
From the wrung heart, of power, through agony,
To pierce the clouds ? Hear, Mercy !—here me ! None
That bleed and weep beneath the smiling sun
Have heavier cause ! Yet hear !—my soul grows dark !—
Who hears the last shriek from the sinking bark
On the mid seas, and with the storm alone,
And bearing to the abyss, unseen, unknown,
Its freight of human hearts ? The o'ermastering wave
Who shall tell how it rushed—and none to save !

Thou hast forsaken me ! I feel, I know,
There would be rescue if this were not so.
Thou'rt at the chase, thou'rt at the festive board,
Thou'rt where the red wine free and high is poured,
Thou'rt where the dancers meet ! A magic glass
Is set within my soul, and proud shapes pass,
Flushing it o'er with pomp from bower and hall ;
I see one shadow, stateliest there of all—

Thine ! What dost *thou* amidst the bright and fair,
Whispering light words, and mocking my despair ?
It is not well of thee ! My love was more
Than fiery song may breathe, deep thought explore,

And there thou smilest, while my heart is dying,
With all its blighted hopes around it lying :
Even thou, on whom they hung their last green leaf——
Yet smile, smile on ! too bright art thou for grief !

Death ! What ! is death a locked and treasured thing,
Guarded by swords of fire ? a hidden spring,
A fabled fruit, that I should thus endure,
As if the world within me held no cure ?
Wherefore not spread free wings—Heaven, heaven control
These thoughts !—they rush—I look into my soul
As down a gulf, and tremble at the array
Of fierce forms crowding it ! Give strength to pray !
So shall their dark host pass.

The storm is stilled
Father in Heaven ! thou, only thou, canst sound
The heart's great deep, with floods of anguish filled.
For human line too fearfully profound.
Therefore, forgive, my Father ! if thy child,
Rocked on its heaving darkness, hath grown wild
And sinned in her despair. It well may be
That thou wouldst lead my spirit back to thee,
By the crushed hope too long on this world poured—
The stricken love which hath perchance adored
A mortal in thy place ! Now let me strive
With thy strong arm no more ! Forgive, forgive !
Take me to peace !

And peace at last is nigh.
A sign is on my brow, a token sent
The o'erwearied dust from home : no breeze flits by,
But calls me with a strange sweet whisper, blent
Of many mysteries.

Hark ! the warning tone
Deepens—its word is *Death !* Alone, alone,
And sad in youth, but chastened, I depart,
Bowing to heaven. Yet, yet my woman's heart
Shal' wake a spirit and a power to bless,
Even in this hour's o'ershadowing fearfulness,
Thee, its first love ! O tender still, and true !
Be it forgotten if mine anguish threw
Drops from its bitter fountain on thy name,
Though but a moment !

Now, with fainting frame,
With soul just lingering on the flight begun,
To bind for thee its last dim thoughts in one,
I bless thee ! Peace be on thy noble head,
Years of bright fame, when I am with the dead !
I bid this prayer survive me, and retain
Its might, again to bless thee, and again !
Thou hast been gathered into my dark fate
Too much ; too long, for my sake, desolate

Hath been thine exiled youth : but now take back,
From dying hands, thy freedom, and re-track
(After a few kind tears for her whose days
Went out in dreams of thee) the sunny ways
Of hope, and find thou happiness ! Yet send
Even then, in silent hours, a thought, dear friend !
Down to my voiceless chamber ; for thy love
Hath been to me all gifts of earth above,
Though bought with burning tears ! It is the sting
Of death to leave that vainly-precious thing
In this cold world ! What were it, then, if thou,
With thy fond eyes, wert gazing on me now ?
Too keen a pang ! Farewell ! and yet once more,
Farewell ! The passion of long years I pour
Into that word ! Thou hearest not—but the woe
And fervor of its tones may one day flow
To thy heart's holy place: there let them dwell.
We shall o'ersweep the grave to meet. Farewell !

THE BRIDE OF THE GREEK ISLE.[1]

"Fear ! I'm a Greek, and how should I fear death ?
A slave, and wherefore should I dread my freedom ?
* * * * * *
I will not live degraded."

Sardanapalus.

Come from the woods with the citron-flowers,
Come with your lyres for the festal hours,
Maids of bright Scio ! They came, and the breeze
Bore their sweet songs o'er the Grecian seas ;
They came, and Eudora stood robed and crowned,
The bride of the morn, with her train around.
Jewels flashed out from her braided hair,
Like starry dews midst the roses there ;
Pearls on her bosom quivering shone,
Heaved by her heart through its golden zone.
But a brow, as those gems of the ocean pale,
Gleamed from beneath her transparent veil ;
Changeful and faint was her fair cheek's hue,
Though clear as a flower which the light looks through ;
And the glance of her dark resplendent eye,
For the aspect of woman at times too high,
Lay floating in mists, which the troubled stream
Of the soul sent up o'er its fervent beam.

She looked on the vine at her father's door,
Like one that is leaving his native shore ;

[1] Founded on a circumstance related in the second series of the *Curiosities of Literature*, and forming part of a picture in the "Painted Biography" there described.

She hung o'er the myrtle once called her own,
As it greenly waved by the threshold stone ;
She turned—and her mother's gaze brought back
Each hue of her childhood's faded track.
Oh ! hush the song, and let her tears
Flow to the dream of her early years !
Holy and pure are the drops that fall
When the young bride goes from her father's hall ;
She goes unto love yet untried and new,
She parts from love which hath still been true :
Mute be the song and the choral strain,
Till her heart's deep well-spring is clear again !
She wept on her mother's faithful breast,
Like a babe that sobs itself to rest ;
She wept—yet laid her hand awhile
In *his* that waited her dawning smile—
Her soul's affianced, nor cherished less
For the gush of nature's tenderness !
She lifted her graceful head at last—
The choking swell of her heart was past ;
And her lovely thoughts from their cells found way
In the sudden flow of a plaintive lay.

THE BRIDE'S FAREWELL.

Why do I weep ? To leave the vine
Whose clusters o'er me bend ;
The myrtle—yet, oh, call it mine !—
The flowers I love to tend.
A thousand thoughts of all things dear
Like shadows o'er me sweep ;
I leave my sunny childhood here,
Oh ! therefore let me weep !

I leave thee, sister ! we have played
Through many a joyous hour,
Where the silvery green of the olive shade
Hung dim o'er fount and bower.
Yes ! thou and I, by stream, by shore,
In song, in prayer, in sleep,
Have been as we may be no more—
Kind sister, let me weep !

I leave thee, father ! Eve's bright moon
Must now light other feet,
With the gathered grapes, and the lyre in tune,
Thy homeward step to greet.
Thou, in whose voice, to bless thy child,
Lay tones of love so deep,
Whose eye o'er all my youth had smiled—
I leave thee ! let me weep !

Mother ! I leave thee ! on thy breast
Pouring out joy and woe,
I have found that holy place of rest
Still changeless—yet I go !
Lips, that have lulled me with your strain !
Eyes, that have watched my sleep !
Will earth give love like *yours* again ?—
Sweet mother ! let me weep !

And like a slight young tree that throws
The weight of rain from its drooping boughs,
Once more she wept. But a changeful thing
Is the human heart—as a mountain spring
That works its way, through the torrent's foam,
To the bright pool near it, the lily's home !
It is well !—the cloud on her soul that lay,
Hath melted in glittering drops away.
Wake again, mingle, sweet flute and lyre !
She turns to her lover, she leaves her sire.
Mother ! on earth it must still be so :
Thou rearest the lovely to see them go !

They are moving onward, the bridal throng,
Ye may track their way by the swells of song ;
Ye may catch through the foliage their white robes' gleam,
Like a swan midst the reeds of a shadowy stream ;
Their arms bear up garlands, their gliding tread
Is over the deep-veined violet's bed ;
They have light leaves around them, blue skies above,
An arch for the triumph of youth and love !

II.

Still and sweet was the home that stood
In the flowering depths of a Grecian wood,
With the soft green light o'er its low roof spread,
As if from the glow of an emerald shed,
Pouring through lime-leaves that mingled on high,
Asleep in the silence of noon's clear sky.
Citrons amidst their dark foliage glowed,
Making a gleam round the lone abode ;
Laurels o'erhung it, whose faintest shiver
Scattered out rays like a glancing river ;
Stars of jasmine its pillars crowned,
Vine-stalks its lattice and the walls had bound ;
And brightly before it a fountain's play
Flung showers through a thicket of glossy bay,
To a cypress which rose in that flashing rain,
Like one tall shaft of some fallen fane.

And thither Ianthis had brought his bride,
And the guests were met by that fountain side.
They lifted the veil from Eudora's face—
It smiled out softly in pensive grace,

With lips of love, and a brow serene,
Meet for the soul of the deep-wood scene.
Bring wine, bring odors !—the board is spread ;
Bring roses ! a chaplet for every head !
The wine-cups foamed, and the rose was showered
On the young and fair from the world embowered ;
The sun looked not on them in that sweet shade,
The winds amid scented boughs were laid ;
And there came by fits, through some wavy tree,
A sound and a gleam of the moaning sea.

Hush ! be still ! Was that no more
Than the murmur from the shore ?
Silence !—did thick rain-drops beat
On the grass like trampling feet !
Fling down the goblet, and draw the sword !
The groves are filled with a pirate horde !
Through the dim olives their sabres shine !
Now must the red blood stream for wine !

The youths from the banquet to battle sprang,
The woods with the shrieks of the maidens rang ;
Under the golden-fruited boughs
There were flashing poniards and darkening brows—
Footsteps, o'er garland and lyre that fled,
And the dying soon on a greensward bed.
—Eudora, Eudora ! *thou* dost not fly !—
She saw but Ianthis before her lie,
With the blood from his breast in a gushing flow,
Like a child's large tears in its hour of woe,
And a gathering film in his lifted eye,
That sought his young bride out mournfully.
She knelt down beside him—her arms she wound
Like tendrils, his drooping neck around.

As if the passion of that fond grasp
Might chain in life with its ivy-clasp.
But they tore her thence in her wild despair,
The sea's fierce rovers—they left him there :
They left to the fountain a dark-red vein,
And on the wet violets a pile of slain,
And a hush of fear through the summer grove.—
So closed the triumph of youth and love !

III.

Gloomy lay the shore that night,
When the moon, with sleeping light,
Bathed each purple Sciote hill—
Gloomy lay the shore, and still.
O'er the wave no gay guitar
Sent its floating music far ;
No glad sound of dancing feet
Woke the starry hours to greet.

But a voice of mortal woe,
In its changes wild or low,
Through the midnight's blue repose,
From the sea-beat rocks arose,
As Eudora's mother stood
Gazing o'er the Ægean flood,
With a fixed and straining eye—
Oh! was the spoiler's vessel nigh?
Yes! there, becalmed in silent sleep,
Dark and alone on a breathless deep,
On a sea of molten silver, dark
Brooding it frowned, that evil bark!
There its broad pennon a shadow cast,
Moveless and black from the tall still mast;
And the heavy sound of its flapping sail
Idly and vainly wooed the gale.
Hushed was all else—had ocean's breast
Rocked e'en Eudora that hour to rest?

To rest? the waves tremble!—what piercing cry
Bursts from the heart of the ship on high!
What light through the heavens, in a sudden spire,
Shoots from the deck up? Fire! 'tis fire!
There are wild forms hurrying to and fro,
Seen darkly clear on that lurid glow;
There are shout, and signal-gun, and call,
And the dashing of water—but fruitless all!
Man may not fetter, nor ocean tame
The might and wrath of the rushing flame!
It hath twined the mast like a glittering snake,
That coils up a tree from a dusky brake;
It hath touched the sails, and their canvas rolls
Away from its breath into shrivelled scrolls:
It hath taken the flag's high place in the air,
And reddened the stars with its wavy glare;
And sent out bright arrows, and soared in glee,
To a burning mount midst the moonlight sea.
The swimmers are plunging from stern and prow—
Eudora! Eudora! where, where art thou?
The slave and his master alike are gone—
Mother! who stands on the deck alone?
The child of thy bosom!—and lo! a brand
Blazing up high in her lifted hand!
And her veil flung back, and her free dark hair
Swayed by the flames as they rock and flare;
And her fragile form to its loftiest height
Dilated, as if by the spirit's might;
And her eye with an eagle-gladness fraught—
Oh! could this work be of woman wrought?
Yes! 'twas her deed!—by that haughty smile,
It was hers: she hath kindled her funeral pile!
Never might shame on that bright head be,
Her blood was the Greek's, and hath made her free!

Proudly she stands like an Indian bride,
On the pyre with the holy dead beside ;
But a shriek from her mother hath caught her ear,
As the flames to her marriage robe draw near,
And starting, she spreads her pale arms in vain
To the form they must never infold again.
—One moment more, and her hands are clasped—
Fallen is the torch they had wildly grasped—
Her sinking knee unto heaven is bowed,
And her last look raised through the smoke's dim shroud,
And her lips as in prayer for her pardon move ;—
Now the light gathers o'er youth and love !

THE SWITZER'S WIFE.

[Werner Stauffacher, one of the three confederates of the field of Grütli, had been alarmed by the envy with which the Austrian bailiff, Landenberg, had noticed the appearance of wealth and comfort which distinguished his dwelling. It was not, however, until roused by the entreaties of his wife, a woman who seems to have been of a heroic spirit, that he was induced to deliberate with his friends upon the measures by which Switzerland was finally delivered.]

" Nor look nor tone revealeth aught
Save woman's quietness of thought ;
And yet around her is a light
Of inward majesty and might."—M. J. J.

* * * * * * * *

" Wer solch ein herz an sienen Busen drückt,
Der kann fur herd und hof mit freuden fechten."

WILHELM TELL.

It was the time when children bound to meet
Their father's homeward step from field or hill,
And when the herd's returning bells are sweet,
In the Swiss valleys, and the lakes grow still,
And the last note of that wild horn swells by
Which haunts the exile's heart with melody.

And lovely smiled full many an Alpine home,
Touched with the crimson of the dying hour,
Which lit its low roof by the torrent's foam,
And pierced its lattice through the vine-hung bower
But one, the loveliest o'er the land that rose,
Then first looked mournful in its green repose.

For Werner sat beneath the linden tree,
That sent its lulling whispers through his door,
Even as man sits, whose heart alone would be
With some deep care, and thus can find no more
The accustomed joy in all which evening brings,
Gathering a household with her quiet wings.

His wife stood hushed before him—sad, yet mild
In her beseeching mien !—he marked it not.
The silvery laughter of his bright-haired child
Rang from the greensward round the sheltered spot,
But seemed unheard ; until at last the boy
Raised from his heaped-up flowers a glance of joy,

And met his father's face. But then a change
Passed swiftly o'er the brow of infant glee,
And a quick sense of something dimly strange
Brought him from play to stand beside the knee
So often climbed, and lift his loving eyes
That shone through clouds of sorrowful surprise.

Then the proud bosom of the strong man shook ;
But tenderly his babe's fair mother laid
Her hand on his, and with a pleading look,
Through tears half-quivering, o'er him bent and said,
"What grief, dear friend, hath made thy heart its prey,
That thou shouldst turn thee from our love away ?

"It is too sad to see thee thus, my friend !
Mark'st thou the wonder on thy boy's fair brow,
Missing the smile from thine ! Oh, cheer thee ! bend
To his soft arms : unseal thy thoughts e'en now !
Thou dost not kindly to withhold the share
Of tried affection in thy secret care."

He looked up into that sweet earnest face,
But sternly, mournfully : not yet the band
Was loosened from his soul ; its inmost place
Not yet unveiled by love's o'ermastering hand,
"Speak low !" he cried, and pointed where on high
The white Alps glittered through the solemn sky :

"We must speak low amidst our ancient hills
And their free torrents ; for the days are come
When tyranny lies couched by forest rills,
And meets the shepherd in his mountain-home.
Go, pour the wine of our own grapes in fear—
Keep silence by the hearth ! its foes are near.

"The envy of the oppressor's eye hath been
Upon my heritage. I sit to-night
Under my household tree, if not serene,
Yet with the faces best beloved in sight :
To-morrow eve may find me chained, and thee—
How can I bear the boy's young smiles to see ?"

The bright blood left that youthful mother's cheek ;
Back on the linden stem she leaned her form ;
And her lip trembled as it strove to speak,
Like a frail harp-string shaken by the storm.
'Twas but a moment, and the faintness passed,
And the free Alpine spirit woke at last.

And she, that ever through her home had moved
With the meek thoughtfulness and quiet smile
Of woman, calmly loving and beloved,
And timid in her happiness the while,
Stood brightly forth, and steadfastly, that hour—
Her clear glance kindling into sudden power.

Ay, pale she stood, but with an eye of light,
And took her fair child to her holy breast,
And lifted her soft voice, that gathered might
As it found language :—"Are we thus oppressed?
Then must we rise upon our mountain-sod,
And man must arm, and woman call on God!

"I know what thou wouldst do ;—and be it done!
Thy soul is darkened with its fears for me.
Trust me to heaven, my husband! this, thy son,
The babe whom I have borne thee, must be free!
And the sweet memory of our pleasant hearth
May well give strength—if aught be strong on earth.

"Thou hast been brooding o'er the silent dread
Of my desponding tears ; now lift once more,
My hunter of the hills! thy stately head,
And let thine eagle glance my joy restore!
I can bear all, but seeing *thee* subdued—
Take to thee back thine own undaunted mood.

"Go forth beside the waters, and along
The chamois paths, and through the forests go ;
And tell, in burning words, thy tale of wrong
To the brave hearts that midst the hamlets glow.
God shall be with thee, my beloved! Away!
Bless but thy child, and leave me—I can pray!"

He sprang up, like a warrior youth awaking
To clarion sounds upon the ringing air ;
He caught her to his breast, while proud tears breaking
From his dark eyes fell o'er her braided hair ;
And "worthy art thou," was his joyous cry,
That man for thee should gird himself to die!

"My bride, my wife, the mother of my child!
Now shall thy name be armor to my heart :
And this our land, by chains no more defiled,
Be taught of thee to choose the better part!
I go—thy spirit on my words shall dwell :
Thy gentle voice shall stir the Alps. Farewell!"

And thus they parted, by the quiet lake,
In the clear starlight : he the strength to rouse
Of the free hills ; she, thoughtful for his sake,
To rock her child beneath the whispering boughs,
Singing its blue half-curtained eyes to sleep
With a low hymn, amidst the stillness deep.

PROPERZIA ROSSI.

[Properzia Rossi, a celebrated female sculptor of Bologna, possessed also of talents for poetry and music, died in consequence of an unrequited attachment. A painting, by Ducis, represents her showing her last work, a basso-relievo of Ariadne, to a Roman knight, the object of her affection, who regards it with indifference.]

"Tell me no more, no more
Of my soul's lofty gifts! Are they not vain
To quench its haunting thirst for happiness?
Have I not loved, and striven, and failed to bind
One true heart unto me, whereon my own
Might find a resting-place, a home for all
Its burden of affections? I depart,
Unknown, though Fame goes with me; I must leave
The earth unknown. Yet it may be that death
Shall give my name a power to win such tears
As would have made life precious."

One dream of passion and of beauty more!
And in its bright fulfilment let me pour
My soul away! Let earth retain a trace
Of that which lit my being, though its race
Might have been loftier far. Yet one more dream!
From my deep spirit one victorious gleam
Ere I depart! For thee alone, for thee!
May this last work, this farewell triumph be—
Thou, loved so vainly! I would have enshrined
Something immortal of my heart and mind,
That yet may speak to thee when I am gone,
Shaking thine inmost bosom with a tone
Of lost affection,—something that may prove
What she hath been, whose melancholy love
On thee was lavished; silent pang and tear,
And fervent song that gushed when none were near,
And dream by night, and weary thought by day,
Stealing the brightness from her life away—
While thou——Awake! not yet within me die!
Under the burden and the agony
Of this vain tenderness—my spirit, wake!
Even for thy sorrowful affection's sake,
Live! in thy work breathe out!—that he may yet,
Feeling sad mastery there, perchance regret
Thine unrequited gift.

II.

It comes! the power
Within me born flows back—my fruitless dower
That could not win me love. Yet once again
I greet it proudly, with its rushing train
Of glorious images: they throng—they press—
A sudden joy lights up my loneliness—
I shall not perish all!
The bright work grows
Beneath my hand, unfolded as a rose,
Leaf after leaf, to beauty; line by line,
I fixed my thought, heart, soul, to burn, to shine,

Through the pale marble's veins. It grows !—and now
I give my own life's history to thy brow,
Forsaken Ariadne !—thou shalt wear
My form, my lineaments ; but oh ! more fair,
Touched into lovelier being by the glow
Which in me dwells, as by the summer light
All things are glorified. From thee my woe
Shall yet look beautiful to meet his sight,
When I am passed away. Thou art the mould,
Wherein I pour the fervent thoughts, the untold,
The self-consuming ! Speak to him of me,
Thou, the deserted by the lonely sea,
With the soft sadness of thine earnest eye—
Speak to him, lorn one ! deeply, mournfully,
Of all my love and grief ! Oh ! could I throw
Into thy frame a voice—a sweet, and low,
And thrilling voice of song ! when he came nigh,
To send the passion of its melody
Through his pierced bosom—on its tones to bear
My life's deep feeling as the southern air
Wafts the faint myrtle's breath—to rise, to swell,
To sink away in accents of farewell,
Winning but one, *one* gush of tears, whose flow
Surely my parted spirit yet might know,
If love be strong as death !

III.

Now fair thou art,
Thou form, whose life is of my burning heart !
Yet all the vision that within me wrought,
I cannot make thee. Oh ! I might have given
Birth to creations of far nobler thought ;
I might have kindled, with the fire of heaven,
Things not of such as die ! But I have been
Too much alone ! A heart whereon to lean,
With all these deep affections that o'erflow
My aching soul, and find no shore below ;
An eye to be my star ; a voice to bring
Hope o'er my path like sounds that breathe of spring :
These are denied me—dreamt of still in vain.
Therefore my brief aspirings from the chain
Are ever but as some wild fitful song,
Rising triumphantly, to die ere long
In dirge-like echoes.

IV.

Yet the world will see
Little of this, my parting work ! in thee.
Thou shalt have fame ! Oh, mockery ! give the reed
From storms a shelter—give the drooping vine
Something round which its tendrils may entwine—
Give the parched flower a raindrop, and the meed

Of love's kind words to woman ! Worthless fame !
That in *his* bosom wins not for my name
The abiding place it asked ! Yet how my heart,
In its own fairy world of song and art,
Once beat for praise ! Are those high longings o'er ?
That which I have been can I be no more ?
Never ! oh, never more ! though still thy sky
Be blue as then, my glorious Italy !
And though the music, whose rich breathings fill
Thin air with soul, be wandering past me still ;
And though the mantle of thy sunlight streams
Unchanged on forms, instinct with poet-dreams.
Never ! oh, never more ! Where'er I move,
The shadow of this broken-hearted love
Is on me and around ! Too well *they* know
Whose life is all within, too soon and well,
When there the blight hath settled ! But I go
Under the silent wings of peace to dwell ;
From the slow wasting, from the lonely pain,
The inward burning of those words—"*in vain.*"
Seared on the heart—I go. 'Twill soon be past !
Sunshine and song, and bright Italian heaven,
And thou, oh ! thou, on whom my spirit cast
Unvalued wealth—who knowest not what was given
In that devotedness—the sad, and deep,
And unrepaid—farewell ! If I could weep
Once, only once, beloved one ! on thy breast,
Pouring my heart forth ere I sink to rest !
But that were happiness !—and unto me
Earth's gift is *fame.* Yet I was formed to be
So richly blessed ! With thee to watch the sky,
Speaking not, feeling but that thou wert nigh ;
With thee to listen, while the tones of song
Swept even as part of our sweet air along--
To listen silently ; with thee to gaze
On forms, the deified of olden days—
This had been joy enough ; and hour by hour,
From its glad well-springs drinking life and power,
How had my spirit soared, and made its fame
A glory for thy brow ! Dreams, dreams !—the fire
Burns faint within me. Yet I leave my name—
As a deep thrill may linger on the lyre
When its full chords are hushed—awhile to live,
And one day haply in thy heart revive
Sad thoughts of me. I leave it, with a sound,
A spell o'er memory, mournfully profound ;
I leave it on my country's air to dwell—
Say proudly yet—"*'Twas hers who loved me well !*"

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GERTRUDE; OR, FIDELITY TILL DEATH.

[The Baron Von der Wart, accused—though it is believed unjustly—as an accomplice in the assassination of the Emperor Albert, was bound alive on the wheel, and attended by his wife Gertrude, throughout his last agonizing hours, with the most heroic devotedness. Her own sufferings, with those of her unfortunate husband, are most affectingly described in a letter which she afterwards addressed to a female friend, and which was published some years ago at Haarlem, in a book entitled *Gertrude Von der Wart; or, Fidelity unto Death.*]

"Dark lowers our fate,
And terrible the storm that gathers o'er us;
But nothing, till that latest agony
Which severs thee from nature, shall unloose
This fixed and sacred hold. In thy dark prison-house,
In the terrific face of armed law,
Yea, on the scaffold, if it needs must be,
I never will forsake thee."—JOANNA BAILLIE.

HER hands were clasped, her dark eyes raised,
The breeze threw back her hair;
Up to the fearful wheel she gazed—
All that she loved was there.
The night was round her clear and cold,
The holy heaven above,
Its pale stars watching to behold
The might of earthly love.

"And bid me not depart," she cried.
"My Rudolph, say not so!
This is no time to quit thy side—
Peace! peace! I cannot go.
Hath the world aught for *me* to fear,
When death is on thy brow?
The world! what means it? *Mine* is *here*—
I will not leave thee now.

I have been with thee in thine hour
Of glory and of bliss;
Doubt not its memory's living power
To strengthen me through *this!*
And thou, mine honored love and true,
Bear on, bear nobly on!
We have the blessèd heaven in view
Whose rest shall soon be won."

And were not these high words to flow
From woman's breaking heart?
Through all that night of bitterest woe
She bore her lofty part;

But oh! with such a glazing eye,
With such a curdling cheek—
Love, Love! of mortal agony
Thou, only *thou*, shouldst speak!

The wind rose high—but with it rose
Her voice, that he might hear:—
Perchance that dark hour brought repose
To happy bosoms near;
While she sat striving with despair
Beside his tortured form,
And pouring her deep soul in prayer
Forth on the rushing storm.

She wiped the death-damps from his brow
With her pale hands and soft,
Whose touch upon the lute-chords low
Had stilled his heart so oft.
She spread her mantle o'er his breast,
She bathed his lips with dew,
And on his cheeks such kisses pressed
As hope and joy ne'er knew.

Oh! lovely are ye, Love and Faith,
Enduring to the last!
She had her meed—one smile in death—
And his worn spirit passed!
While even as o'er a martyr's grave
She knelt on that sad spot,
And, weeping, blessed the God who gave
Strength to forsake it not!

IMELDA.

> "Sometimes
> The young forgot the lessons they had learnt,
> And loved when they should hate—like thee, Imelda!
> *Italy, a Poem.*

"Passa la bella Donna, e par che dorma."—Tasso.

We have the myrtle's breath around us here,
Amidst the fallen pillars: this hath been
Some Naïad's fane of old. How brightly clear,
Flinging a vein of silver o'er the scene,
Up through the shadowy grass the fountain wells,
And music with it, gushing from beneath
The ivied altar! That sweet murmur tells
The rich wild flowers no tale of woe or death;
Yet once the wave was darkened, and a stain
Lay deep, and heavy drops—but not of rain—
On the dim violets by its marble bed,
And the pale shining water-lily's head.

Sad is that legend's truth.—A fair girl met
One whom she loved, by this lone temple's spring,
Just as the sun behind the pine-grove set,
And eve's low voice in whispers woke, to bring
All wanderers home. They stood, that gentle pair,
With the blue heaven of Italy above,
And citron-odors dying on the air,
And light leaves trembling round, and early love
Deep in each breast. What recked *their* souls of strife
Between their fathers! Unto them young life
Spread out the treasures of its vernal years;
And if they wept, they wept far other tears
Than the cold world brings forth. They stood that hour
Speaking of hope; while tree, and fount, and flower,
And star, just gleaming through the cypress boughs,
Seemed holy things, as records of their vows.

But change came o'er the scene. A hurrying tread
Broke on the whispery shades. Imelda knew
The footstep of her brother's wrath, and fled
Up where the cedars make yon avenue
Dim with green twilight; pausing there, she caught—
Was it the clash of swords? A swift dark thought
Struck down her lip's rich crimson as it passed,
And from her eye the sunny sparkle took
One moment with its fearfulness, and shook
Her slight frame fiercely, as a stormy blast
Might rock the rose. Once more, and yet once more,
She stilled her heart to listen—all was o'er;
Sweet summer winds alone were heard to sigh,
Bearing the nightingale's deep spirit by.

That night Imelda's voice was in the song—
Lovely it floated through the festive throng
Peopling her father's halls. That fatal night
Her eye looked starry in its dazzling light,
And her cheek glowed with beauty's flushing dies,
Like a rich cloud of eve in southern skies—
A burning, ruby cloud. There were, whose gaze
Followed her form beneath the clear lamp's blaze,
And marvelled at its radiance. But a few
Beheld the brightness of that feverish hue
With something of dim fear ; and in that glance
Found strange and sudden tokens of unrest,
Startling to meet amidst the mazy dance,
Where thought, if present, an unbidden guest,
Comes not unmasked. Howe'er this were, the time
Sped as it speeds with joy, and grief, and crime
Alike : and when the banquet's hall was left
Unto its garlands of their bloom bereft ;
When trembling stars looked silvery in their wane,
And heavy flowers yet slumbered, once again
There stole a footstep, fleet, light, and lone,
Through the dim cedar shade—the step of one
That started at a leaf, of one that fled,
Of one that panted with some secret dread.
What did Imelda there? She sought the scene
Where love so late with youth and hope had been.
Bodings were on her soul ; a shuddering thrill
Ran through each vein, when first the Naïad's rill
Met her with melody—sweet sounds and low :
We hear them yet, they live along its flow—
Her voice is music lost ! The fountain-side
She gained—the wave flashed forth—'twas darkly dyed
Even as from warrior-hearts ; and on its edge,
Amidst the fern, and flowers, and moss-tufts deep,
There lay, as lulled by stream and rustling sedge,
A youth, a graceful youth. "Oh ! dost thou sleep?
Azzo !" she cried, "my Azzo ! is this rest?"
But then her low tones faltered :—"On thy breast
Is the stain—yes, 'tis blood ! And that cold cheek—
That moveless lip :—thou dost not slumber?—speak,
Speak, Azzo, my beloved ! No sound—no breath—
What hath come thus between our spirits? Death !
Death?—I but dream—I dream !" And there she stood
A faint fair trembler, gazing first on blood,
With her fair arm around yon cypress thrown,
Her form sustained by that dark stem alone,
And fading fast, like spell-struck maid of old,
Into white waves dissolving, clear and cold ;
When from the grass her dimmed eye caught a gleam—
'Twas where a sword lay shivered by the stream—
Her brother's sword !—she knew it ; and she knew
'Twas with a venomed point that weapon slew !
Woe for young love ! But love is strong. There came
Strength upon woman's fragile heart and frame ;

There came swift courage ! On the dewy ground
She knelt, with all her dark hair floating round
Like a long silken stole ; she knelt, and pressed
Her lips of glowing life to Azzo's breast,
Drawing the poison forth. A strange, sad sight !
Pale death, and fearless love, and solemn night !
—So the moon saw them last.
The morn came singing
Through the green forests of the Apennines,
With all her joyous birds their free flight winging,
And steps and voices out amongst the vines.
What found that dayspring *here?* Two fair forms laid
Like sculptured sleepers ; from the myrtle shade
Casting a gleam of beauty o'er the wave,
Still, mournful, sweet. Were such things for the grave ?
Could it be so indeed ? That radiant girl,
Decked as for bridal hours !—long braids of pearl
Amidst her shadowy locks were faintly shining,
As tears might shine, with melancholy light ;
And there was gold her slender waist entwining ;
And her pale graceful arms—how sadly bright !
And fiery gems upon her breast were lying,
And round her marble brow red roses dying.
But she died first—the violet's hue had spread
O'er her sweet eyelids with repose oppressed ;
She had bowed heavily her gentle head,
And on the youth's hushed bosom sunk to rest,
So slept they well !—the poison's work was done !
Love with true heart had striven—but Death had won.

EDITH.

A TALE OF THE WOODS.[1]

"Du Heilige ! rufe dein Kind zurück !
Ich habe genossen das irdische Glück,
Ich habe gelebt und geliebet."—WALLENSTEIN.

THE woods—oh ! solemn are the boundless woods
Of the great western world when day declines,
And louder sounds the roll of distant floods,
More deep the rustling of the ancient pines.
When dimness gathers on the stilly air,
And mystery seems o'er every leaf to brood,
Awful it is for human heart to bear
The might and burden of the solitude !
Yet, in that hour, midst those green wastes, there sate
One young and fair ; and oh ! how desolate !
But undismayed—while sank the crimson light,
And the high cedars darkened with the night.

[1] Founded on incidents related in an American work, *Sketches of Connecticut.*

Alone she sate ; though many lay around,
They, pale and silent on the bloody ground,
Were severed from her need and from her woe,
  Far as death severs life. O'er that wild spot
Combat had raged, and brought the valiant low,
  And left them, with the history of their lot,
Unto the forest's oaks—a fearful scene
For her whose home of other days had been
Midst the fair halls of England ! But the love
  Which filled her soul was strong to cast out fear ;
And by its might upborne all else above,
  She shrank not—marked not that the dead were near.
Of him alone she thought, whose languid head
  Faintly upon her wedded bosom fell ;
Memory of aught but him on earth was fled,
  While heavily she felt his life-blood well
Fast o'er her garments forth, and vainly bound
With her torn robe and hair the streaming wound—
Yet hoped, still hoped ! Oh ! from such hope how long
  Affection wooes the whispers that deceive,
Even when the pressure of dismay grows strong !
  And we, that weep, watch, tremble, ne'er believe
The blow indeed can fall. So bowed she there
Over the dying, while unconscious prayer
Filled all her soul. Now poured the moonlight down,
Veining the pine-stems through the foliage brown,
And fire-flies, kindling up the leafy place,
Cast fitful radiance o'er the warrior's face,
Whereby she caught its changes. To her eye,
  The eye that faded looked through gathering haze,
Whence love, o'ermastering mortal agony,
  Lifted a long, deep, melancholy gaze,
When voice was not ; that fond, sad meaning passed—
She knew the fulness of her woe at last !
One shriek the forests heard—and mute she lay
And cold, yet clasping still the precious clay
To her scarce-heaving breast. O Love and Death !
  Ye have sad meetings on this changeful earth,
Many and sad !—but airs of heavenly breath
  Shall melt the links which bind you, for your birth
Is far apart.

Now light of richer hue
Than the moon sheds, came flushing mist and dew ;
The pines grew red with morning ; fresh winds played ;
Bright colored birds with splendor crossed the shade,
Flitting on flower-like wings ; glad murmurs broke
  From reed, and spray, and leaf—the living strings
Of earth's Æolian lyre, whose music woke
  Into young life and joy all happy things.
And she, too, woke from that long dreamless trance,
The widowed Edith : fearfully her glance
Fell, as in doubt, on faces dark and strange,

And dusky forms. A sudden sense of change
Flashed o'er her spirit, even ere memory swept
The tide of anguish back with thoughts that slept;
Yet half instinctively she rose, and spread
Her arms, as 'twere for something lost or fled,
Then faintly sank again. The forest-bough,
With all its whispers, waved not o'er her now.
Where was she? Midst the people of the wild,
By the red hunter's fire: an aged chief,
Whose home looked sad—for therein played no child—
Had borne her, in the stillness of her grief,
To that lone cabin of the woods; and there,
Won by a form so desolately fair,
Or touched with thoughts from some past sorrow sprung,
O'er her low couch an Indian matron hung;
While in grave silence, yet with earnest eye,
The ancient warrior of the waste stood by,
Bending in watchfulness his proud gray head,
And leaning on his bow.

And life returned,
Life, but with all its memories of the dead,
To Edith's heart; and well the sufferer learned
Her task of meek endurance—well she wore
The chastened grief that humbly can adore
Midst blinding tears. But unto that old pair,
Even as a breath of spring's awakening air,
Her presence was; or as a sweet wild tune
Bringing back tender thoughts, which all too soon
Depart with childhood. Sadly they had seen
A daughter to the land of spirits go;
And ever from that time her fading mien,
And voice, like winds of summer, soft and low,
Had haunted their dim years: but Edith's face
Now looked in holy sweetness from her place,
And they again seemed parents. Oh! the joy,
The rich deep blessedness—though earth's alloy,
Fear, that still bodes, be there—of pouring forth
The heart's whole power of love, its wealth and worth
Of strong affection, in one healthful flow,
On something all its own! that kindly glow,
Which to shut inward is consuming pain,
Gives the glad soul its flowering time again,
When, like the sunshine, freed. And gentle cares
The adopted Edith meekly gave for theirs
Who loved her thus. Her spirit dwelt the while
With the departed, and her patient smile
Spoke of farewells to earth; yet still she prayed
E'en o'er her soldier's lowly grave, for aid
One purpose to fulfil, to leave one trace
Brightly recording that her dwelling-place
Had been among the wilds; for well she knew
The secret whisper of her bosom true,
Which warned her hence.

And now, by many a word
Linked unto moments when the heart was stirred—
By the sweet mournfulness of many a hymn,
Sung when the woods at eve grew hushed and dim—
By the persuasion of her fervent eye,
All eloquent with childlike piety—
By the still beauty of her life she strove
To win for heaven, and heaven-born truth, the love
Poured out on her so freely. Nor in vain
Was that soft-breathing influence to enchain
The soul in gentle bounds ; by slow degrees
Light followed on, as when a summer breeze
Parts the deep masses of the forest shade,
And lets the sunbeam through. Her voice was made
Even such a breeze ; and she, a lowly guide,
By faith and sorrow raised and purified,
So to the Cross her Indian fosterers led,
Until their prayers were one. When morning spread
O'er the blue lake, and when the sunset's glow
Touched into golden bronze the cypress bough,
And when the quiet of the Sabbath time
Sank on her heart, though no melodious chime
Wakened the wilderness, their prayers were one.
Now might she pass in hope—her work was done !
And she *was* passing from the woods away—
The broken flower of England might not stay
Amidst those alien shades. Her eye was bright
Even yet with something of a starry light,
But her form wasted, and her fair young cheek
Wore oft and patiently a fatal streak,
A rose whose root was death. The parting sigh
Of autumn through the forests had gone by,
And the rich maple o'er her wanderings lone
Its crimson leaves in many a shower had strown,
Flushing the air ; and winter's blast had been
Amidst the pines ; and now a softer green
Fringed their dark boughs : for spring again had come,
The sunny spring ! but Edith to her home
Was journeying fast. Alas ! we think it sad
To part with life when all the earth looks glad
In her young lovely things—when voices break
Into sweet sounds, and leaves and blossoms wake :
Is it not brighter, then, in that far clime
Where graves are not, nor blights of changeful time,
If *here* such glory dwell with passing blooms,
Such golden sunshine rest around the tombs ?
So thought the dying one. 'Twas early day,
And sounds and odors, with the breezes' play,
Whispering of spring-time, through the cabin door,
Unto her couch life's farewell sweetness bore.
Then with a look where all her hope awoke,
"My father !"—to the gray-haired chief she spoke—
"Knowest thou that I depart ?" "I know, I know,

He answered mournfully, "that thou must go
To thy beloved, my daughter!" "Sorrow not
For me, kind mother!" with meek smiles once more
She murmured in low tones: "one happy lot
Awaits us, friends! upon the better shore;
For we have prayed together in one trust,
And lifted our frail spirits from the dust
To God, who gave them. Lay me by mine own,
Under the cedar shade: where he is gone,
Thither I go. There will my sisters be,
And the dead parents, lisping at whose knee
My childhood's prayer was learned—the Saviour's prayer
Which now *ye* know—and I shall meet you there.
Father and gentle mother! ye have bound
The bruisèd reed, and mercy shall be found
By Mercy's children." From the matron's eye
Dropped tears, her sole and passionate reply.
But Edith felt them not; for now a sleep
Solemnly beautiful—a stillness deep,
Fell on her settled face. Then, sad and slow,
And mantling up his stately head in woe,
"Thou'rt passing hence," he sang, that warrior old,
In sounds like those by plaintive waters rolled.

"Thou'rt passing from the lake's green side,
And the hunter's hearth away:
For the time of flowers, for the summer's pride,
Daughter! thou canst not stay.

"Thou'rt journeying to thy spirit's home,
Where the skies are ever clear:
The corn-month's golden hours will come,
But they shall not find thee here.

"And we shall miss thy voice, my bird!
Under our whispering pine;
Music shall midst the leaves be heard,
But not a song like thine.

"A breeze that roves o'er stream and hill,
Telling of winter gone,
Hath such sweet falls—yet caught we still
A farewell in its tone.

"But thou, my bright one! thou shalt be
Where farewell sounds are o'er;
Thou, in the eyes thou lovest, shalt see
No fear of parting more.

"The mossy grave thy tears have wet,
And the wind's wild moanings by,
Thou with thy kindred shalt forget,
Midst flowers—not such as die.

"The shadow from thy brow shall melt
The sorrow from thy strain,
But where thine earthly smile hath dwelt
Our heart shall thirst in vain.

"Dim will our cabin be, and lone,
When thou, its light, art fled;
Yet hath thy step the pathway shown
Unto the happy dead.

"And we will follow thee, our guide!
And join that shining band;
Thou'rt passing from the lake's green side—
Go to the better land!"

The song had ceased—the listeners caught no breath:
That lovely sleep had melted into death.

THE INDIAN CITY.[1]

"What deep wounds ever closed without a scar?
The heart's bleed longest, and but heal to wear
That which disfigures it."

Childe Harold.

I.

Royal in splendor went down the day
On the plain where an Indian city lay,
With its crown of domes o'er the forest high,
Red, as if fused in the burning sky;
And its deep groves pierced by the rays which made
A bright stream's way through each long arcade,
Till the pillared vaults of the banian stood
Like torch-lit aisles midst the solemn wood;
And the plantain glittered with leaves of gold,
As a tree midst the genii gardens old,
And the cypress lifted a blazing spire,
And the stems of the cocoas were shafts of fire.
Many a white pagoda's gleam
Slept lovely round upon lake and stream,
Broken alone by the lotus flowers,
As they caught the glow of the sun's last hours,
Like rosy wine in their cups, and shed
Its glory forth on their crystal bed.
Many a graceful Hindoo maid,
With the water-vase from the palmy shade,
Came gliding light as the desert's roe,
Down marble steps, to the tanks below;
And a cool sweet plashing was ever heard,
As the molten glass of the wave was stirred,

[1] From a tale in Forbes's *Oriental Memoirs.*

And a murmur, thrilling the scented air,
Told where the Bramin bowed in prayer.
—There wandered a noble Moslem boy
Through the scene of beauty in breathless joy?
He gazed where the stately city rose,
Like a pageant of clouds, in its red repose;
He turned where birds through the gorgeous gloom
Of the woods went glancing on starry plume;
He tracked the brink of the shining lake,
By the tall canes feathered in tuft and brake;
Till the path he chose, in its mazes, wound
To the very heart of the holy ground.

And there lay the water, as if enshrined
In a rocky urn, from the sun and wind,
Bearing the hues of the grove on high,
Far down through its dark still purity.
The flood beyond, to the fiery west,
Spread out like a metal mirror's breast;
But that lone bay, in its dimness deep,
Seemed made for the swimmer's joyous leap,
For the stag athirst from the noontide's chase
For all free things of the wild wood's race.

Like a falcon's glance on the wide blue sky,
Was the kindling flash of the boy's glad eye;
Like a sea-bird's flight to the foaming wave,
From the shadowy bank was the bound he gave;
Dashing the spray-drops, cold and white,
O'er the glossy leaves in its young delight,
And bowing his locks to the waters clear—
Alas! he dreamt not that fate was near.

His mother looked from her tent the while,
O'er heaven and earth with a quiet smile:
She, on her way unto Mecca's fane,
Had stayed the march of her pilgrim train,
Calmly to linger a few brief hours
In the Bramin city's glorious bowers;
For the pomp of the forest, the wave's bright fall
The red gold of sunset—she loved them all

II.

The moon rose clear in the splendor given
To the deep-blue night of an Indian heaven;
The boy from the high-arched woods came back
Oh! what had he met in his lonely track?
The serpent's glance through the long reeds bright?
The arrowy spring of the tiger's might?

No! yet as one by a conflict worn,
With his graceful hair all soiled and torn.

And a gloom on the lids of his darkened eye,
And a gash on his bosom—he came to die!
He looked for the face to his young heart sweet,
And found it, and sank at his mother's feet.

"Speak to me! whence does the swift blood run?
What hath befallen thee, my child, my son?"
The mist of death on his brow lay pale,
But his voice just lingered to breathe the tale,
Murmuring faintly of wrongs and scorn.
And wounds from the children of Brahma borne
This was the doom for a Moslem found
With a foot profane on their holy ground—
This was for sullying the pure waves, free
Unto them alone—'twas their god's decree.

A change came o'er his wandering look—
The mother shrieked not then nor shook:
Breathless she knelt in her son's young blood,
Rending her mantle to staunch its flood;
But it rushed like a river which none may stay,
Bearing a flower to the deep away.
That which our love to the earth would chain,
Fearfully striving with heaven in vain—
That which fades from us while yet we hold,
Clasped to our bosoms, its mortal mould,
Was fleeting before her, afar and fast;
One moment—the soul from the face had passed!
Are there no words for that common woe?
Ask of the thousands its depth that know!
The boy had breathed, in his dreaming rest,
Like a low-voiced dove, on her gentle breast;
He had stood, when she sorrowed, beside her knee,
Painfully stilling his quick heart's glee;
He had kissed from her cheek the widow's tears,
With the loving lip of his infant years:
He had smiled o'er her path like a bright spring day
Now in his blood on the earth he lay!
Murdered! Alas! and we love so well
In a world where anguish like this can dwell!

She bowed down mutely o'er her dead—
They that stood round her watched in dread;
They watched—she knew not they were by—
Her soul sat veiled in its agony.
On the silent lips she pressed no kiss—
Too stern was the grasp of her pangs for this:
She shed no tear, as her face bent low
O'er the shining hair of the lifeless brow;
She looked but into the half-shut eye
With a gaze that found there no reply,
And, shrieking, mantled her head from sight,
And fell, struck down by her sorrow's might.

And what deep change, what work of power,
Was wrought on her secret soul that hour ?
How rose the lonely one ? She rose
Like a prophetess from dark repose !
And proudly flung from her face the veil,
And shook the hair from her forehead pale,
And midst her wondering handmaids stood,
With the sudden glance of a dauntless mood—
Ay, lifting up to the midnight sky
A brow in its regal passion high,
With a close and rigid grasp she pressed
The blood-stained robe to her heaving breast,
And said—"Not yet, not yet I weep,
Not yet my spirit shall sink or sleep !
Not till yon city, in ruins rent,
Be piled for its victim's monument.
Cover his dust ! bear it on before !
It shall visit those temple gates once more."

And away in the train of the dead she turned,
The strength of her step was the heart that burned ;
And the Bramin groves in the starlight smiled,
As the mother passed with her slaughtered child.

III.

Hark ! a wild sound of the desert's horn
Through the woods round the Indian city borne,
A peal of the cymbal and tambour afar—
War ! 'tis the gathering of Moslem war !
The Bramin looked from the leaguered towers—
He saw the wild archer amidst his bowers
And the lake that flashed through the plaintain shade
As the light of the lances along it played ;
And the canes that shook as if winds were high,
When the fiery steed of the waste swept by ;
And the camp as it lay like a billowy sea,
Wide round the sheltering banian-tree.

There stood one tent from the rest apart—
That was the place of a wounded heart.
Oh ! deep is a wounded heart, and strong
A voice that cries against mighty wrong ;
And full of death as a hot wind's blight,
Doth the ire of a crushed affection light.

Maimuna from realm to realm had passed,
And her tale had rung like a trumpet's blast.
There had been words from her pale lips poured,
Each one a spell to unsheath the sword.
The Tartar had sprung from his steed to hear,
And the dark chief of Araby grasped his spear,
Till a chain of long lances begirt the wall,
And a vow was recorded that doomed its fall.

Back with the dust of her son she came,
When her voice had kindled that lightning flame ;
She came in the might of a queenly foe,
Banner, and javelin, and bended bow ;
But a deeper power on her forehead sate—
There sought the warrior his star of fate :
Her eye's wild flash through the tented line
Was hailed as a spirit and a sign,
And the faintest tone from her lip was caught
As a sybil's breath of prophetic thought.
—Vain, bitter glory !—the gift of grief,
That lights up vengeance to find relief,
Transient and faithless ! it cannot fill
So the deep void of the heart, nor still
The yearning left by a broken tie,
That haunted fever of which we die !

Sickening she turned from her sad renown,
As a king in death might reject his crown.
Slowly the strength of the walls gave way—
She withered faster from day to day ;
All the proud sounds of that bannered plain,
To stay the flight of her soul were vain ;
Like an eagle caged, it had striven, and worn
The frail dust, ne'er for such conflicts born,
Till the bars were rent, and the hour was come
For its fearful rushing through darkness home.

The bright sun set in his pomp and pride,
As on that eve, when the fair boy died :
She gazed from her couch, and a softness fell
O'er her weary heart with the day's farewell ;
She spoke, and her voice, in its dying tone,
Had an echo of feelings that long seemed flown.
She murmured a low sweet cradle-song,
Strange midst the din of a warrior throng—
A song of the time when her boy's young cheek
Had glowed on her breast in its slumber meek.
But something which breathed from that mournful strain
Sent a fitful gust o'er her soul again ;
And starting, as if from a dream, she cried—
" Give him proud burial at my side !
There, by yon lake, where the palm-boughs wave,
When the temples are fallen, make there our grave."
And the temples fell, though the spirit passed
That stayed not for victory's voice at last ;
When the day was won for the martyr dead,
For the broken heart and the bright blood shed.

Through the gates of the vanquished the Tartar steed
Bore in the avenger with foaming speed ;
Free swept the flame through the idol fanes,
And the streams glowed red, as from warrior veins ;

And the sword of the Moslem, let loose to slay,
Like the panther leapt on its flying prey,
Till a city of ruin begirt the shade
Where the boy and his mother at rest were laid.
Palace and tower on that plain were left,
Like fallen trees by the lightning cleft ;
The wild vine mantled the stately square,
The Rajah's throne was the serpent's lair,
And the jungle grass o'er the altar sprung—
This was the work of one deep heart wrung !

THE PEASANT GIRL OF THE RHONE.

——" There is but one place in the world—
Thither, where he lies buried !

* * * * *

There, there is all that still remains of him:
That single spot is the whole earth to me."
COLERIDGE'S *Wallenstein.*

" Alas ! our young affections run to waste
Or water but the desert."—*Childe Harold.*"

THERE went a warrior's funeral through the night,
A waving of tall plumes, a ruddy light
Of torches, fitfully and wildly thrown
From the high woods, along the sweeping Rhone,
Far down the waters. Heavily and dead,
Under the moaning trees, the horse-hoof's tread
In muffled sounds upon the greensward fell,
As chieftains passed ; and solemnly the swell
Of the deep requiem, o'er the gleaming river
Borne with the gale, and with the leaves' low shiver,
Floated and died. Proud mourners there, yet pale,
Wore man's mute anguish sternly,—but of *one*,
Oh, who shall speak ? What words *his* brow unveil ?
A father following to the grave his son !—
That is no grief to picture ! Sad and slow,
Through the wood-shadows, moved the knightly train,
With youth's fair form upon the bier laid low—
Fair even when found amidst the bloody slain,
Stretched by its broken lance. They reached the lone
Baronial chapel, where the forest-gloom
Fell heaviest, for the massy boughs had grown
Into thick archways, as to vault the tomb.
Stately they trode the hollow-ringing aisle,
A strange deep echo shuddered through the pile,
Till crested heads at last in silence bent
Round the De Coucis' antique monument,
When dust to dust was given :—and Aymer slept
Beneath the drooping banners of his line,
Whose broidered folds the Syrian wind had swept
Proudly and oft o'er fields of Palestine.

So the sad rite was closed. The sculptor gave
Trophies, ere long, to deck that lordly grave ;
And the pale image of a youth, arrayed
As warriors are for fight, but calmly laid
In slumber on his shield. Then all was done—
And still around the dead. His name was heard
Perchance when wine-cups flowed and hearts were stirred
By some old song, or tale of battle won
Told round the hearth. But in his father's breast
Manhood's high passions woke again, and pressed
On to their mark ; and in his friend's clear eye
There dwelt no shadow of a dream gone by ;
And with the brethren of his fields, the feast
Was gay as when the voice whose sounds had ceased
Mingled with theirs. Even thus life's rushing tide
Bears back affection from the grave's dark side ;
Alas ! to think of this !—the heart's void place
Filled up so soon !—so like a summer cloud,
All that we loved to pass and leave no trace !—
He lay forgotten in his early shroud.
Forgotten ?—not of all ! The sunny smile
Glancing in play o'er that proud lip erewhile,
And the dark locks, whose breezy waving threw
A gladness round, whene'er their shade withdrew
From the bright brow ; and all the sweetness lying
Within that eagle eye's jet radiance deep,
And all the music with that young voice dying,
Whose joyous echoes made the quick heart leap
As at a hunter's bugle—these things lived
Still in one breast, whose silent love survived
The pomps of kindred sorrow. Day by day,
On Aymer's tomb fresh flowers in garlands lay,
Through the dim fane soft summer odors breathing,
And all the pale sepulchral trophies wreathing,
And with a flush of deeper brilliance glowing
In the rich light, like molten rubies flowing
Through storied windows down. The violet there
Might speak of love—a secret love and lowly ;
And the rose image all things fleet and fair ;
And the faint passion-flower, the sad and holy,
Tell of diviner hopes. But whose light hand,
As for an altar, wove the radiant band ?
Whose gentle nurture brought, from hidden dells,
That gem-like wealth of blossoms and sweet bells,
To blush through every season ? Blight and chill
Might touch the changing woods ; but duly still
For years those gorgeous coronals renewed,
And brightly clasping marble spear and helm,
Even through mid-winter, filled the solitude
With a strange smile—a glow of summer's realm.
Surely some fond and fervent heart was pouring
Its youth's vain worship on the dust, adoring
In lone devotedness !

One spring morn rose,
And found, within that tomb's proud shadow laid-
Oh! not as midst the vineyards, to repose
From the fierce noon—a dark-haired peasant maid.
Who could reveal her story? That still face
Had once been fair; for on the clear arched brow
And the curved lip there lingered yet such grace
As sculpture gives its dreams; and long and low
The deep black lashes, o'er the half-shut eye—
For death was on its lids—fell mournfully.
But the cold cheek was sunk, the raven hair
Dimmed, the slight form all wasted, as by care.
Whence came that early blight? *Her* kindred's place
Was not amidst the high De Couci race;
Yet there her shrine had been! She grasped a wreath—
The tomb's last garland!—This was love in death.

INDIAN WOMAN'S DEATH-SONG.

[An Indian woman, driven to despair by her husband's desertion of her for another wife, entered a canoe with her children, and rowed it down the Mississippi towards a cataract. Her voice was heard from the shore singing a mournful death-song, until overpowered by the sound of the waters in which she perished. The tale is related in Long's "Expedition to the Source of St. Peter's River."]

"Non, je ne puis vivre avec un cœur brisé. Il faut que je retrouve la joie, et que je m'unisse aux esprits libres de l'air."—*Bride of Messina*—Translated by MADAME DE STAEL.

"Let not my child be a girl, for very sad is the life of a woman."
The Prairie.

DOWN a broad river of the western wilds,
Piercing thick forest-glooms, a light canoe
Swept with the current: fearful was the speed
Of the frail bark, as by a tempest's wing
Borne leaf-like on to where the mist of spray
Rose with the cataract's thunder. Yet within,
Proudly, and dauntlessly, and all alone,
Save that a babe lay sleeping at her breast,
A woman stood! Upon her Indian brow
Sat a strange gladness, and her dark hair waved
As if triumphantly. She pressed her child,
In its bright slumber, to her beating heart,
And lifted her sweet voice, that rose awhile
Above the sound of waters, high and clear,
Wafting a wild proud strain—a song of death.

"ROLL swiftly to the spirit's land, thou mighty stream and free!
Father of ancient waters, roll! and bear our lives with thee!
The weary bird that storms have tossed would seek the sunshine's calm,
And the deer that hath the arrow's hurt flies to the woods of balm.

"Roll on !—my warrior's eye hath looked upon another's face,
And mine hath faded from his soul, as fades a moonbeam's trace :
My shadow comes not o'er his path, my whisper to his dream,
He flings away the broken reed. Roll swifter yet, thou stream !

"The voice that spoke of other days is hushed within *his* breast,
But *mine* its lonely music haunts, and will not let me rest ;
It sings a low and mournful song of gladness that is gone—
I cannot live without that light. Father of waves ! roll on !

"Will he not miss the bounding step that met him from the chase ?
The heart of love that made his home an ever-sunny place ?
The hand that spread the hunter's board, and decked his couch of yore ?
He will not ! Roll, dark foaming stream, on to the better shore !

"Some blessed fount amidst the woods of that bright land must flow,
Whose waters from my soul may lave the memory of this woe ;
Some gentle wind must whisper there, whose breath may waft away
The burden of the heavy night, the sadness of the day.

"And thou, my babe ! though born, like me, for woman's weary lot,
Smile !—to that wasting of the heart, my own ! I leave thee not ;
Too bright a thing art *thou* to pine in aching love away—
Thy mother bears thee far, young fawn ! from sorrow and decay.

"She bears thee to the glorious bowers where none are heard to weep,
And where the unkind one hath no power again to trouble sleep ;
And where the soul shall find its youth, as wakening from a dream :
One moment, and that realm is ours. On, on, dark rolling stream !"

JOAN OF ARC IN RHEIMS.

["Jeanne d'Arc avait eu la joie de voir à Chalons quelques amis de son enfance. Une joie plus ineffable encore l'attendait à Rheims, au sein de son triomphe : Jacques d'Arc, son père, y se trouva, aussitôt que de troupes de Charles VII. y furent entrées ; et comme les deux frères de notre héroine l'avaient accompagnée, elle se vit pour un instant au milieu de sa famille, dans les bras d'un père vertueux."—*Vie de Jeanne d'Arc.*]

"Thou hast a charmèd cup, O Fame !
A draught that mantles high,
And seems to lift this earth-born frame
Above mortality :
Away ! to me—a woman—bring
Sweet waters from affection's spring !

That was a joyous day in Rheims of old,
When peal on peal of mighty music rolled
Forth from her thronged cathedral ; while around,
A multitude, whose billows made no sound,
Chained to a hush of wonder, though elate
With victory, listened at their temple's gate.

And what was done within ? Within, the light,
Through the rich gloom of pictured windows flowing,
Tinged with soft awfulness a stately sight—
The chivalry of France their proud heads bowing
In martial vassalage ! While midst that ring,
And shadowed by ancestral tombs, a king
Received his birthright's crown. For this, the hymn
Swelled out like rushing waters, and the day
With the sweet censer's misty breath grew dim,
As through long aisles it floated o'er the array
Of arms and sweeping stoles. But who, alone
And unapproached, beside the altar stone,
With the white banner forth like sunshine streaming,
And the gold helm through clouds of fragrance gleaming,
Silent and radiant stood ? The helm was raised,
And the fair face revealed, that upward gazed,
Intensely worshipping—a still, clear face,
Youthful, but brightly solemn ! Woman's cheek
And brow were there, in deep devotion meek,
Yet glorified, with inspiration's trace
On its pure paleness ; while, enthroned above,
The pictured Virgin, with her smile of love,
Seemed bending o'er her votaress. That slight form !
Was that the leader through the battle storm ?
Had the soft light in that adoring eye
Guided the warrior where the swords flashed high ?
'Twas so, even so !—and thou, the shepherd's child,
Joanne, the lovely dreamer of the wild !
Never before, and never since that hour,
Hath woman, mantled with victorious power,
Stood forth as *thou* beside the shrine didst stand,
Holy amidst the knighthood of the land.
And, beautiful with joy and with renown,
Lift thy white banner o'er the olden crown
Ransomed for France by thee.

The rites are done.
Now let the dome with trumpet-notes be shaken,
And bid the echoes of the tomb awaken,
And come thou forth, that heaven's rejoicing sun
May give thee welcome from thine own blue skies,
Daughter of victory ! A triumphant strain,
A proud rich stream of warlike melodies,
Gushed through the portals of the antique fane,
And forth she came. Then rose a nation's sound :
Oh ! what a power to bid the quick heart bound,
The wind bears onward with the stormy cheer
Man gives to glory on her high career !
Is there indeed such power ?—far deeper dwells
In one kind household voice, to reach the cells
Whence happiness flows forth ! The shouts that filled
The hollow heaven tempestuously, were stilled
One moment ; and in that brief pause, the tone,
As of a breeze that o'er her home had blown,

Sank on the bright maid's heart. "Joanne!"—Who spoke
Like those whose childhood with *her* childhood grew
Under one roof? "Joanne!"—*that* murmur broke
With sounds of weeping forth! She turned—she knew
Beside her, marked from all the thousands there,
In the calm beauty of his silver hair,
The stately shepherd; and the youth whose joy,
From his dark eye flashed proudly; and the boy,
The youngest born, that ever loved her best:—
"Father! and ye, my brothers!" On the breast
Of that gray sire she sank—and swiftly back,
Even in an instant, to their native track
Her free thoughts flowed. She saw the pomp no more,
The plumes, the banners; to her cabin-door,
And to the Fairy's Fountain in the glade,
Where her young sisters by her side had played,
And to her hamlet's chapel, where it rose
Hallowing the forest unto deep repose,
Her spirit turned. The very wood-note, sung
In early spring-time by the bird, which dwelt
Where o'er her father's roof the beech leaves hung,
Was in her heart; a music heard and felt,
Winning her back to nature. She unbound
The helm of many battles from her head,
And, with her bright locks bowed to sweep the ground,
Lifting her voice up, wept for joy and said—
"Bless me, my father! bless me! and with thee,
To the still cabin and the beechen tree,
Let me return!"
Oh! never did thine eye
Through the green haunts of happy infancy
Wander again, Joanne! Too much of fame
Had shed its radiance on thy peasant name;
And bought alone by gifts beyond all price—
The trusting heart's repose, the paradise
Of home, with all its loves—doth fate allow
The crown of glory unto woman's brow.

PAULINE.

"To die for what we love! Oh! there is power
In the true heart, and pride, and joy, for *this*
It is to *live* without the vanished light
That strength is needed."

"Cosi trapassa al trapassar d'un Giorno
Della vita mortal il fiore e'l verde."—Tasso.

Along the starlit Seine went music swelling,
Till the air thrilled with its exulting mirth;
Proudly it floated, even as if no dwelling
For cares of stricken hearts were found on earth;

And a glad sound the measure lightly beat,
A happy chime of many dancing feet.

For in a palace of the land that night,
Lamps, and fresh roses, and green leaves were hung,
And from the painted walls a stream of light
On flying forms beneath soft splendor flung ;
But loveliest far amidst the revel's pride
Was one—the lady from the Danube side.

Pauline, the meekly bright ! though now no more
Her clear eye flashed with youth's all-tameless glee,
Yet something holier than its dayspring wore,
There in soft rest lay beautiful to see ;
A charm with graver, tenderer, sweetness fraught—
The blending of deep love and matron thought.

Through the gay throng she moved, serenely fair,
And such calm joy as fills a moonlight sky
Sat on her brow beneath its graceful hair,
As her young daughter in the dance went by,
With the fleet step of one that yet hath known
Smiles and kind voices in this world alone.

Lurked there no secret boding in her breast ?
Did no faint whisper warn of evil nigh ?
Such oft awake when most the heart seems blest
Midst the light laughter of festivity.
Whence come those tones ? Alas ! enough we know
To mingle fear with all triumphal show !

Who spoke of evil when young feet were flying
In fairy rings around the echoing hall ?
Soft airs through braided locks in perfume sighing,
Glad pulses beating unto music's call ?
Silence !—the minstrels pause—and hark ! a sound,
A strange quick rustling which their notes had drowned !

And lo ! a light upon the dancers breaking—
Not such their clear and silvery lamps had shed ;
From the gay dream of revelry awaking,
One moment holds them still in breathless dread.
The wild fierce lustre grows : then bursts a cry—
Fire ! through the hall and round it gathering—fly !

And forth they rush, as chased by sword and spear,
To the green coverts of the garden bowers—
A gorgeous masque of pageantry and fear,
Startling the birds and trampling down the flowers :
While from the dome behind, red sparkles driven
Pierce the dark stillness of the midnight heaven.

And where is she—Pauline? the hurrying throng
Have swept her onward as a stormy blast
Might sweep some faint o'erwearied bird along—
Till now the threshold of that death is past,
And free she stands beneath the starry skies,
Calling her child—but no sweet voice replies.

"Bertha! where art thou? Speak! oh, speak, my own!"
Alas! unconscious of her pangs the while,
The gentle girl, in fear's cold grasp alone,
Powerless had sunk within the blazing pile;
A young bright form, decked gloriously for death,
With flowers all shrinking from the flame's fierce breath!

But oh! thy strength, deep love! There is no power
To stay the mother from that rolling grave,
Though fast on high the fiery volumes tower,
And forth like banners from each lattice wave:
Back, back she rushes through a host combined—
Mighty is anguish, with affection twined!

And what bold step may follow, midst the roar
Of the red billows, o'er their prey that rise?
None!—Courage there stood still—and never more
Did those fair forms emerge on human eyes!
Was one bright meeting theirs, one wild farewell?
And died they heart to heart?—Oh! who can tell?

Freshly and cloudlessly the morning broke
On that sad palace, midst its pleasure shades;
Its painted roofs had sunk—yet black with smoke
And lonely stood its marble colonnades:
But yester eve their shafts with wreaths were bound,
Now lay the scene one shrivelled scroll around!

And bore the ruins no recording trace
Of all that woman's heart had dared and done?
Yes! there were gems to mark its mortal place,
That forth from dust and ashes dimly shone!
Those had the mother, on her gentle breast,
Worn round her child's fair image, there at rest.

And they were all!—the tender and the true
Left this alone her sacrifice to prove,
Hallowing the spot where mirth once lightly flew,
To deep lone chastened thoughts of grief and love.
Oh! we have need of patient faith below,
To clear away the mysteries of such woe!

JUANA.

[Juana, mother of the Emperor Charles V., upon the death of her husband, Philip the Handsome of Austria, who had treated her with uniform neglect, had his body laid upon a bed of state in a magnificent dress ; and being possessed with the idea that it would revive, watched it for a length of time, incessantly waiting for the moment of returning life.]

> "It is but dust thou lookst upon. This love,
> This wild and passionate idolatry,
> What doth it in the shadow of the grave ?
> Gather it back within thy lonely heart,
> So must it ever end : too much we give
> Unto the things that perish."

The night wind shook the tapestry around an ancient palace room,
And torches, as it rose and fell, waved through the gorgeous gloom ;
And o'er a shadowy regal couch threw fitful gleams and red,
Where a woman with long raven hair sat watching by the dead.

Pale shone the features of the dead, yet glorious still to see,
Like a hunter or a chief struck down while his heart and step were free.
No shroud he wore, no robe of death, but there majestic lay
Proudly and sadly glittering in royalty's array.

But she that with the dark hair watched by the cold slumberer's side,
On *her* wan cheek no beauty dwelt, and in her garb no pride ;
Only her full impassioned eyes, as o'er that clay she bent,
A wildness and a tenderness in strange resplendence blent.

And as the swift thoughts crossed her soul, like shadows of a cloud,
Amidst the silent room of death, the dreamer spoke aloud ;
She spoke to him that could not hear, and cried, "Thou yet wilt wake,
And learn my watchings and my tears, beloved one ! for thy sake.

"They told me this was death, but well I knew it could not be ;
Fairest and stateliest of the earth ! who spoke of death for *thee?*
They would have wrapped the funeral shroud thy gallant form around,
But I forbade—and there thou art, a monarch, robed and crowned !

"With all thy bright locks gleaming still, their coronal beneath,
And thy brow so proudly beautiful—who said that this was death ?
Silence hath been upon thy lips, and stillness round thee long,
But the hopeful spirit in my breast is all undimmed and strong.

"I know thou hast not loved me yet ; I am not fair like thee,
The very glance of whose clear eye threw round a light of glee !
A frail and drooping form is mine—a cold unsmiling cheek—
Oh ! I have but a woman's heart wherewith *thy* heart to seek.

"But when thou wakest, my prince, my lord ! and hearest how I have kept
A lonely vigil by thy side, and o'er thee prayed and wept—
How in one long deep dream of thee my nights and days have past—
Surely that humble patient love *must* win back love at last !

"And thou wilt smile—my own, my own, shall be the sunny smile,
Which brightly fell, and joyously, on all *but* me erewhile!
No more in vain affection's thirst my weary soul shall pine—
Oh! years of hope deferred were paid by one fond glance of thine!

"Thou'lt meet me with that radiant look when thou comest from the chase—
For me, for me, in festal halls it shall kindle o'er thy face!
Thou'lt reck no more though beauty's gift mine aspect may not bless;
In thy kind eyes, this deep, deep love shall give me loveliness.

"But wake! my heart within me burns, yet once more to rejoice
In the sound to which it ever leaped, the music of thy voice.
Awake! I sit in solitude, that thy first look and tone,
And the gladness of thine opening eyes, may all be mine alone."

In the still chambers of the dust, thus poured forth day by day,
The passion of that loving dream from a troubled soul found way,
Until the shadows of the grave had swept o'er every grace,
Left 'midst the awfulness of death on the princely form and face.

And slowly broke the fearful truth upon the watcher's breast,
And they bore away the royal dead with requiems to his rest,
With banners and with knightly plumes all waving in the wind—
But a woman's broken heart was left in its lone despair behind.

THE AMERICAN FOREST GIRL.

> "A fearful gift upon thy heart is laid,
> Woman!—A power to suffer and to love;
> Therefore thou so canst pity."

Wildly and mournfully the Indian drum
On the deep hush of moonlight forests broke—
"Sing us a death-song, for thine hour is come."—
So the red warriors to their captive spoke.
Still, and amidst those dusky forms alone,
A youth, a fair-haired youth of England stood,
Like a king's son; though from his cheek had flown
The mantling crimson of the island blood,
And his pressed lips looked marble. Fiercely bright
And high around him blazed the fires of night,
Rocking beneath the cedars to and fro,
As the wind passed, and with a fitful glow
Lighting the victim's face: but who could tell
Of what within his secret heart befell,
Known but to heaven that hour? Perchance a thought
Of his far home then so intensely wrought,
That its full image, pictured to his eye
On the dark ground of mortal agony,

Rose clear as day !—and he might *see* the band
Of his young sisters wandering hand in hand
Where the laburnums drooped ; or haply binding
The jasmine up the door's low pillars winding ;
Or, as day closed upon their gentle mirth,
Gathering, with braided hair, around the hearth,
Where sat their mother ; and that mother's face
Its grave sweet smile yet wearing in the place
Where so it ever smiled ! Perchance the prayer
Learned at her knee came back on his despair ;
The blessing from her voice, the very tone
Of her "*Good-night!*" might breathe from boyhood gone
—He started and looked up : thick cypress boughs,
Full of strange sound, waved o'er him, darkly red
In the broad stormy firelight ; savage brows,
With tall plumes crested and wild hues o'erspread,
Girt him like fever phantoms ; and pale stars
Looked through the branches as through dungeon bars,
Shedding no hope. He knew, he felt his doom—
Oh ! what a tale to shadow with its gloom
That happy hall in England ! Idle fear !
Would the winds tell it ? Who might dream or hear
The secret of the forests ? To the stake
They bound him ; and that proud young soldier strove
His father's spirit in his breast to wake,
Trusting to die in silence ! He, the love
Of many hearts !—the fondly reared—the fair,
Gladdening all eyes to see ! And fettered there
He stood beside his death-pyre, and the brand
Flamed up to light in the chieftain's hand.
He thought upon his God. Hush ! hark ! a cry
Breaks on the stern and dread solemnity—
A step hath pierced the ring ! Who dares intrude
On the dark hunters in their vengeful mood ?
A girl—a young slight girl—a fawn-like child
Of green savannas and the leafy wild,
Springing unmarked till then, as some lone flower
Happy because the sunshine is its dower ;
Yet, one that knew how early tears are shed,
For *hers* had mourned a playmate-brother dead.

She had sat gazing on the victim long,
Until the pity of her soul grew strong ;
And, by its passion's deepening fervor swayed,
Even to the stake she rushed, and gently laid
His bright head on her bosom, and around
His form her slender arms to shield it wound
Like close Liannes ; then raised her glittering eye,
And clear-toned voice, then said, "He shall not die !"
"He shall not die !"—the gloomy forest thrilled
To that sweet sound. A sudden wonder fell
On the fierce throng ; and heart and hand were stilled,
Struck down as by the whisper of a spell.

They gazed : their dark souls bowed before the maid,
She of the dancing step in wood and glade !
And, as her cheek flushed through its olive hue,
As her black tresses to the night-wind flew,
Something o'ermastered them from that young mien—
Something of heaven in silence felt and seen ;
And seeming, to their childlike faith, a token
That the Great Spirit by her voice had spoken.

They loosed the bonds that held their captive's breath ;
From his pale lips they took the cup of death ;
They quenched the brand beneath the cypress tree :
" Away," they cried, " young stranger, thou art free !"

COSTANZA.

" Art thou then desolate ?
Of friends, of hopes forsaken ? Come to me !
I am thine own. Have trusted hearts proved false ?
Flatterers deceived thee ? Wanderer, come to me !
Why didst thou ever leave me ? Knowest thou all
I would have borne, and called it joy to bear,
For thy sake ? Knowest thou that thy voice hath power
To shake me with a thrill of happiness
By one kind tone ?—to fill mine eyes with tears
Of yearning love ? And thou—oh ! thou didst throw
That crushed affection back upon my heart ;
Yet come to me !—it died not."

She knelt in prayer. A stream of sunset fell
Through the stained window of her lonely cell,
And with its rich, deep, melancholy glow,
Flushing her cheek and pale Madonna brow,
While o'er her long hair's flowing jet it threw
Bright waves of gold—the autumn forest's hue—
Seemed all a vision's mist of glory, spread
By painting's touch around some holy head,
Virgin's or fairest martyr's. In her eye
Which glanced as dark clear water to the sky,
What solemn fervor lived ! And yet what woe,
Lay like some buried thing, still seen below
The glassy tide ! Oh ! he that could reveal
What life had taught that chastened heart to feel,
Might speak indeed of woman's blighted years,
And wasted love, and vainly bitter tears !
But she had told her griefs to heaven alone,
And of the gentle saint no more was known,
Than that she fled the world's cold breath, and made
A temple of the pine and chestnut shade,
Filling its depths with soul, whene'er her hymn
ose through each murmur of the green, and dim,
And ancient solitude ; where hidden streams
Went moaning through the grass, like sounds in dreams—

Music for weary hearts ! 'Midst leaves and flowers
She dwelt, and knew all secrets of their powers,
All nature's balms, wherewith her gliding tread
To the sick peasant on his lowly bed
Came and brought hope ! while scarce of mortal birth
He deemed the pale fair form that held on earth
Communion but with grief.

Ere long, a cell,
A rock-hewn chapel rose, a cross of stone
Gleamed through the dark trees o'er a sparkling well,
And a sweet voice, of rich yet mournful tone,
Told the Calabrian wilds that duly there
Costanza lifted her sad heart in prayer.
And now 'twas prayer's own hour. That voice again
Through the dim foliage sent its heavenly strain,
That made the cypress quiver where it stood,
In day's last crimson soaring from the wood
Like spiry flame. But as the bright sun set,
Other and wilder sounds in tumult met
The floating song. Strange sounds !—the trumpet's peal
Made hollow by the rocks ; the clash of steel ;
The rallying war-cry. In the mountain pass
There had been combat ; blood was on the grass,
Banners had strewn the waters ; chiefs lay dying,
And the pine branches crashed before the flying.

And all was changed within the still retreat,
Costanza's home : there entered hurrying feet,
Dark looks of shame and sorrow—mail-clad men,
Stern fugitives from that wild battle-glen,
Scaring the ringdoves from the porch roof, bore
A wounded warrior in. The rocky floor
Gave back deep echoes to his clanging sword,
As there they laid their leader, and implored
The sweet saint's prayers to heal him : then for flight,
Through the wide forest and the mantling night,
Sped breathless again. They passed ; but he,
The stateliest of a host—alas ! to see
What mother's eyes have watched in rosy sleep,
Till joy, for very fulness, turned to weep,
Thus changed !—a fearful thing ! His golden crest
Was shivered, and the bright scarf on his breast—
Some costly love-gift—rent : but what of these ?
There were the clustering raven locks—the breeze,
As it came in through lime and myrtle flowers,
Might scarcely lift them ; steeped in bloody showers,
So heavily upon the pallid clay
Of the damp cheek they hung. The eyes' dark ray,
Where was it ? And the lips !—they gasped apart,
With their light curve, as from the chisel's art,
Still proudly beautiful ! but that white hue—
Was it not death's ?—that stillness—that cold dew

On the scarred forehead? No! his spirit broke
From its deep trance ere long, yet but awoke
To wander in wild dreams; and there he lay,
By the fierce fever as a green reed shaken,
The haughty chief of thousands—the forsaken
Of all save one. *She* fled not. Day by day—
Such hours are woman's birthright—she, unknown,
Kept watch beside him, fearless and alone;
Binding his wounds, and oft in silence laving
His brow with tears that mourned the strong man's raving.
He felt them not, nor marked the light veiled form
Still hovering nigh! yet sometimes, when that storm
Of frenzy sank, her voice, in tone as low
As a young mother's by the cradle singing,
Would soothe him with sweet *aves*, gently bringing
Moments of slumber, when the fiery glow
Ebbed from his hollow cheek.

At last faint gleams
Of memory dawned upon the cloud of dreams,
And feebly lifting, as a child, his head,
And gazing round him from his leafy bed,
He murmured forth, "Where am I? What soft strain
Passed like a breeze across my burning brain?
Back from my youth it floated, with a tone
Of life's first music, and a thought of one—
Where is she now? and where the gauds of pride,
Whose hollow splendor lured me from her side?
All lost!—and this is death!—I *cannot* die
Without forgiveness from that mournful eye!
Away! the earth hath lost her. Was she born
To brook abandonment, to strive with scorn?
My first, my holiest love!—her broken heart
Lies low, and I—unpardoned I depart."

But then Costanza raised the shadowy veil
From her dark locks and features brightly pale,
And stood before him with a smile—oh! ne'er
Did aught that *smiled* so much of sadness wear—
And said, "Cesario! look on me; I live
To say my heart hath bled, and can forgive.
I loved thee with such worship, such deep trust,
As should be heaven's alone—and heaven is just!
I bless thee—be at peace!"

But o'er his frame
Too fast the strong tide rushed—the sudden shame,
The joy, the amaze! He bowed his head—it fell
On the wronged bosom which had loved so well;
And love, still perfect, gave him refuge there—
His last faint breath just waved her floating hair.

MADELINE.

A DOMESTIC TALE.

"Who should it be?—Where shouldst thou look for kindness?
When we are sick, where can we turn for succor;
When we are wretched, where can we complain;
And when the world looks cold and surly on us,
Where can we go to meet a warmer eye
With such sure confidence as to a mother?"

JOANNA BAILLIE.

"My child, my child, thou leavest me! I shall hear
The gentle voice no more that blest mine ear
With its first utterance: I shall miss the sound
Of thy light step amidst the flowers around,
And thy soft-breathing hymn at twilight's close,
And thy 'Good-night' at parting for repose.
Under the vine-leaves I shall sit alone,
And the low breeze will have a mournful tone
Amidst their tendrils, while I think of thee,
My child! and thou, along the moonlit sea,
With a soft sadness haply in thy glance,
Shalt watch thine own, thy pleasant land of France,
Fading to air. Yet blessings with thee go!
Love guard thee, gentlest! and the exile's woe
From thy young heart be far! And sorrow not
For me, sweet daughter! in my lonely lot,
God shall be with me. Now, farewell! farewell!
Thou that hast been what words may never tell
Unto thy mother's bosom, since the days
When thou wert pillowed there, and wont to raise
In sudden laughter thence thy loving eye
That still sought mine: these moments are gone by—
Thou too must go, my flower! Yet with thee dwell
The peace of God! One, one more gaze: farewell!"

This was a mother's parting with her child—
A young meek bride, on whom fair fortune smiled,
And wooed her with a voice of love away
From childhood's home: yet there, with fond delay,
She lingered on the threshold, heard the note
Of her caged bird through trellised rose-leaves float,
And fell upon her mother's neck and wept,
Whilst old remembrances, that long had slept,
Gushed o'er her soul, and many a vanished day
As in one picture traced, before her lay.

But the farewell was said; and on the deep,
When its breast heaved in sunset's golden sleep,
With a calmed heart, young Madeline ere long
Poured forth her own sweet, solemn vesper-song,
Breathing of home. Through stillness heard afar,
And duly rising with the first pale star,

That voice was on the waters ; till at last
The sounding ocean solitudes were passed,
And the bright land was reached, the youthful world
That glows along the West : the sales were furled
In its clear sunshine, and the gentle bride
Looked on the home that promised hearts untried
A bower of bliss to come. Alas ! we trace
The map of our own paths, and long ere years
With their dull steps the brilliant lines efface.
On sweeps the storm, and blots them out with tears !
That home was darkened soon : the summer breeze
Welcomed with death the wanderers from the seas :
Death unto one, and anguish—how forlorn !
To her that, widowed in her marriage morn,
Sat in her voiceless dwelling, whence with him,
Her bosom's first beloved, her friend and guide,
Joy had gone forth, and left the green earth dim,
As from the sun shut out on every side
By the close veil of misery. Oh ! but ill,
When with rich hopes o'erfraught, the young high heart
Bears its first blow ! it knows not yet the part
Which life will teach—to suffer and be still,
And with submissive love to count the flowers
Which yet are spared, and through the future hours
To send no busy dream ! *She* had not learned
Of sorrow till that hour, and therefore turned
In weariness from life. Then came the unrest,
The heart-sick yearning of the exile's breast,
The haunting sounds of voices far away,
And household steps : until at last she lay
On her lone couch of sickness, lost in dreams
Of the gay vineyards and blue-rushing streams
In her own sunny land ; and murmuring oft
Familiar names, in accents wild yet soft,
To strangers round that bed who knew not aught
Of the deep spells wherewith each word was fraught.
To strangers? Oh ! could strangers raise the head
Gently as *hers* was raised ? Did strangers shed
The kindly tears which bathed that feverish brow
And wasted cheek with half-unconscious flow ?
Something was there that, through the lingering night,
Outwatches patiently the taper's light—
Something that faints not through the day's distress,
That fears not toil, that knows not weariness—
Love, true and perfect love ! Whence came that power,
Uprearing through the storm the drooping flower ?
Whence ?—who can ask ? The wild delirium passed,
And from her eyes the spirit looked at last
Into her *mother's* face, and wakening knew
The brow's calm grace, the hair's dear silvery hue,
The kind sweet smile of old !—and had *she* come,
Thus in life's evening from her distant home,
To save her child ? Even so—nor yet in vain :
In that young heart a light sprang up again,

And lovely still, with so much love to give,
Seemed this fair world, though faded ; still to live
Was not to pine forsaken. On the breast
That rocked her childhood, sinking in soft rest,
"Sweet mother ! gentlest mother ! can it be ?"
The lorn one cried, "and do I look on thee ?
Take back thy wanderer from this fatal shore,
Peace shall be ours beneath our vines once more."

THE QUEEN OF PRUSSIA'S TOMB.

["This tomb is in the garden of Charlottenburg, near Berlin. It was not without surprise that I came suddenly, among trees, upon a fair white Doric temple. I might and should have deemed it a mere adornment of the grounds, but the cypress and the willow declare it a habitation of the dead. Upon a sarcophagus of white marble lay a sheet, and the outline of the human form was plainly visible beneath its folds. The person with me reverently turned it back, and displayed the statue of his queen. It is a portrait statue recumbent, said to be a perfect resemblance — not as in death, but when she lived to bless and be blessed. Nothing can be more calm and kind than the expression of her features. The hands are folded on the bosom ; the limbs are sufficiently crossed to show the repose of life. Here the King brings her children annually to offer garlands at her grave. These hang in withered mournfulness above this living image of their departed mother."—SHERER'S *Notes and Reflections during a Ramble in Germany.*]

"In sweet pride upon that insult keen
She smiled ; then drooping mute and brokenhearted,
To the cold comfort of the grave departed."—MILMAN.

It stands where northern willows weep,
A temple fair and lone ;
Soft shadows o'er its marble sweep
From cypress branches thrown ;
While silently around it spread,
Thou feelest the presence of the dead.

And what within is richly shrined ?
A sculptured woman's form,
Lovely, in perfect rest reclined,
As one beyond the storm :
Yet not of death, but slumber, lies
The solemn sweetness on those eyes.

The folded hands, the calm pure face,
The mantle's quiet flow,
The gentle yet majestic grace
Throned on the matron brow ;
These, in that scene of tender gloom,
With a still glory robe the tomb.

There stands an eagle, at the feet
Of the fair image wrought ;
A kingly emblem—nor unmeet
To wake yet deeper thought :
She whose high heart finds rest below
Was royal in her birth and woe.

There are pale garlands hung above
Of dying scent and hue ;
She was a mother—in her love
How sorrowfully true !
Oh ! hallowed long be every leaf,
The record of her children's grief !

She saw their birthright's warrior crown
Of olden glory spoiled,
The standard of their sires borne down,
The shield's bright blazon soiled :
She met the tempest meekly brave,
Then turned o'erwearied to the grave.

She slumbered: but it came—it came
Her land's redeeming hour,
With the glad shout, and signal flame
Sent on from tower to tower!
Fast through the realm a spirit moved—
'Twas hers, the lofty and the loved.

Then was her name a note that rung
To rouse bold hearts from sleep;
Her memory, as a banner flung
Forth by the Baltic deep:
Her grief, a bitter vial poured
To sanctify the avenger's sword.

And the crowned eagle spread again
His pinion to the sun;
And the strong land shook off its chain—
So was the triumph won!
But woe for earth, where sorrow's tone
Still blends with victory's!—*She* was gone.

THE MEMORIAL PILLAR.

[On the road-side, between Penrith and Appleby, stands a small pillar with this inscription:—"This pillar was erected, in the year 1656, by Ann, Countess-Dowager of Pembroke, for a memorial of her last parting, in this place, with her good and pious mother, Margaret, Countess-Dowager of Cumberland, on the 2d April, 1616."—See notes to the *Pleasures of Memory*.]

"Hast thou through Eden's wild-wood vales, pursued
Each mountain scene magnificently rude,
Nor with attention's lifted eye revered
That modest stone, by pious Pembroke reared,
Which still records, beyond the pencil's power,
The silent sorrows of a parting hour?"—ROGERS.

MOTHER and child! whose blending tears
Have sanctified the place,
Where, to the love of many years
Was given one last embrace—
Oh! ye have shrined a spell of power,
Deep in your record of that hour.

A spell to waken solemn thought—
A still, small undertone,
That calls back days of childhood fraught
With many a treasure gone;
And smites, perchance, the hidden source,
Though long untroubled—of remorse.

For who, that gazes on the stone
Which marks your parting spot,
Who but a mother's love hath known—
The *one* love changing not?
Alas! and haply learned its worth
First with the sound of "Earth to earth!"

But thou, high-hearted daughter! thou,
O'er whose bright honored head
Blessings and tears of holiest flow,
E'en here were fondly shed—
Thou from the passion of the grief,
In its full burst, couldst draw relief.

For, oh! though painful be the excess
The might wherewith it swells,
In nature's fount no bitterness
Of nature's mingling dwells;
And thou hadst not, by wrong or pride,
Poisoned the free and healthful tide.

But didst thou meet the face no more
Which thy young heart first knew?
And all—was all in this world o'er
With ties thus close and true?
It was! On earth no other eye
Could give thee back thine infancy.

No other voice could pierce the maze
Where, deep within thy breast,
The sounds and dreams of other days
With memory lay at rest ;
No other smile to thee could bring
A gladdening, like the breath of spring.

Yet, while thy place of weeping still
Its lone memorial keeps,
While on thy name, midst wood and hill,
The quiet sunshine sleeps,
And touches, in each graven line,
Of reverential thought a sign ;

Can I, while yet these tokens wear
The impress of the dead,
Think of the love embodied there
As of a vision fled ?
A perished thing, the joy and flower
And glory of one earthly hour ?

Not so !—I will not bow me so
To thoughts that breathe despair!
A loftier faith we need below,
Life's farewell words to bear.
Mother and child !—your tears are past—
Surely your hearts have met at last.

THE GRAVE OF A POETESS.[1]

"Ne me plaignez pas—si vous saviez
Combien de peines ce tombeau m'a épargnées ! "

I stood beside thy lowly grave ;
Spring odors breathed around,
And music, in the river wave,
Passed with a lulling sound.

All happy things that love the sun
In the bright air glanced by,
And a glad murmur seemed to run
Through the soft azure sky.

Fresh leaves were on the ivy bough
That fringed the ruins near ;
Young voices were abroad—but thou
Their sweetness couldst not hear.

And mournful grew my heart for thee !
Thou in whose woman's mind
The ray that brightens earth and sea,
The light of song, was shrined.

Mournful, that thou wert slumbering low,
With a dread curtain drawn
Between thee and the golden glow
Of this world's vernal dawn.

Parted from all the song and bloom
Thou wouldst have loved so well,
To thee the sunshine round thy tomb
Was but a broken spell.

The bird, the insect on the wing,
In their bright reckless play,
Might feel the flush and life of spring—
And thou wert passed away.

But then, e'en then, a nobler thought
O'er my vain sadness came ;
The immortal spirit woke, and wrought
Within my thrilling frame.

[1] "Extrinsic interest has lately attached to the fine scenery of Woodstock, near Kilkenny, on account of its having been the last residence of the author of *Psyche*. Her grave is one of many in the churchyard of the village. The river runs smoothly by. The ruins of an ancient abbey, that have been partially converted into a church, reverently throw their mantle of tender shadow over it."—*Tales by the O'Hara Family.*

Surely on lovelier things, I said,
Thou must have looked ere now,
Than all that round our pathway shed
Odors and hues below.

The shadows of the tomb are here,
Yet beautiful is earth!
What see'st thou, then, where no dim fear,
No haunting dream hath birth?

Here a vain love to passing flowers
Thou gavest; but where thou art,
The sway is not with changeful hours—
There love and death must part.

Thou hast left sorrow in thy song,
A voice not loud but deep;
The glorious bowers of earth among,
How often didst thou weep?

Where couldst thou fix on mortal ground
Thy tender thoughts and high?—
Now peace the woman's heart hath found,
And joy the poet's eye.

SONGS OF THE AFFECTIONS;

WITH OTHER POEMS.

They tell but dreams—a lonely spirit's dreams;
Yet ever through their fleeting imagery
Wanders a vein of melancholy love,
An aimless thought of home; as in the song
Of the caged skylark ye may deem there dwells
A passionate memory of blue skies and flowers,
And living streams, far off!

A SPIRIT'S RETURN.

"This is to be a mortal,
And see the things beyond mortality!" MANFRED.

THY voice prevails—dear friend, my gentle friend!
This long-shut heart for thee shall be unsealed,
And though thy soft eye mournfully will bend
Over the troubled stream, yet once revealed
Shall its freed waters flow; then rocks must close
For evermore, above their dark repose.

Come while the gorgeous mysteries of the sky
Fused in the crimson sea of sunset lie;
Come to the woods, where all strange wandering sound
Is mingled into harmony profound;
Where the leaves thrill with spirit, while the wind
Fills with a viewless being, unconfined,

The trembling reeds and fountains—our own dell,
With its green dimness and Æolian breath,
Shall suit the unveiling of dark records well—
Hear me in tenderness and silent faith !

Thou knewest me not in life's fresh vernal morn—
I would thou hadst !—for then my heart on thine
Had poured a worthier love ; now, all o'erworn
By its deep thirst for something too divine,
It hath but fitful music to bestow,
Echoes of harp-strings broken long ago.
Yet even in youth companionless I stood,
As a lone forest-bird 'midst ocean's foam ;
For me the silver cords of brotherhood
Were early loosed ; the voices from my home
Passed one by one, and melody and mirth
Left me a dreamer by a silent hearth.

But, with the fulness of a heart that burned
For the deep sympathies of mind, I turned
From that unanswering spot, and fondly sought
In all wild scenes with thrilling murmurs fraught,
In every still small voice and sound of power,
And flute-note of the wind through cave and bower,
A perilous delight !—for then first woke
My life's lone passion, the mysterious quest
Of secret knowledge ; and each tone that broke
From the wood-arches or the fountain's breast,
Making my quick soul vibrate as a lyre,
But ministered to that strange inborn fire.

'Midst the bright silence of the mountain dells,
In noontide hours or golden-summer eves,
My thoughts have burst forth as a gale that swells
Into a rushing blast, and from the leaves
Shakes out response. O thou rich world unseen !
Thou curtained realm of spirits !—thus my cry
Hath troubled air and silence—dost thou lie
Spread all around, yet by some filmy screen
Shut from us ever ? The resounding woods,
Do their depths teem with marvels ?—and the floods,
And the pure fountains, leading secret veins
Of quenchless melody through rock and hill,
Have they bright dwellers ?—and their lone domains
Peopled with beauty, which may never still
Our weary thirst of soul ? Cold, weak and cold,
Is earth's vain language, piercing not one fold
Of our deep being ! Oh, for gifts more high !
For a seer's glance to rend mortality !
For a charmed rod, to call from each dark shrine
The oracles divine !

I woke from those high fantasies, to know
My kindred with the earth—I woke to love :
O gentle friend ! to love in doubt and woe,
Shutting the heart the worshipped name above,
Is to love deeply—and *my* spirit's dower
Was a sad gift, a melancholy power
Of so adoring—with a buried care,
And with the o'erflowing of a voiceless prayer,
And with a deepening dream that day by day,
In the still shadow of its lonely sway,
Folded me closer, till the world held naught
Save the *one* being to my centred thought.
There was no music but his voice to hear,
No joy but such as with *his* step drew near ;
Light was but where he looked—life where he moved;
Silently, fervently, thus, thus I loved.
Oh ! but such love is fearful !—and I knew
Its gathering doom : the soul's prophetic sight
Even then unfolded in my breast, and threw
O'er all things round a full, strong, vivid light,
Too sorrowfully clear !—an undertone
Was given to Nature's harp, for me alone .
Whispering of grief. Grief ?—be strong, awake !
Hath not thy love been victory, O my soul ?
Hath not its conflict won its voice to shake
Death's fastnesses ?—a magic to control
Worlds far removed ?—from o'er the grave to thee
Love hath made answer ; and *thy* tale should be
Sung like a lay of triumph ! Now return,
And take thy treasure from its bosomed urn,
And lift it once to light !

In fear, in pain,
I said I loved—but yet a heavenly strain
Of sweetness floated down the tearful stream,
A joy flashed through the trouble of my dream !
I knew myself beloved !—we breathed no vow,
No mingling visions might our fate allow,
As unto happy hearts ; but still and deep,
Like a rich jewel gleaming in a grave,
Like golden sand in some dark river's wave,
So did my soul that costly knowledge keep
So jealously !—a thing o'er which to shed,
When stars alone beheld the drooping head,
Lone tears ! yet ofttimes burdened with the excess
Of our strange nature's quivering happiness.

But, oh ! sweet friend ! we dream not of love's might
Till death has robed with soft and solemn light
The image we enshrine !—Before *that* hour,
We have but glimpses of the o'ermastering power
Within us laid !—*then* doth the spirit-flame
With sword-like lightning rend its mortal frame ;

The wings of that which pants to follow fast
Shake their clay-bars, as with a prisoned blast—
The sea is in our souls!

He died—*he* died
On whom my lone devotedness was cast!
I might not keep one vigil by his side,
I, whose wrung heart watched with him to the last!
I might not once his fainting head sustain,
Nor bathed his parched lips in the hour of pain,
Nor say to him "Farewell!" He passed away—
Oh! had *my* love been there, its conquering sway
Had won him back from death!—but thus removed,
Borne o'er the abyss no sounding-line hath proved,
Joined with the unknown, the viewless—he became
Unto my thoughts another, yet the same—
Changed—hallowed—glorified!—and his low grave
Seemed a bright mournful altar—mine, all mine:—
Brother and friend, soon left me *that* sole shrine,
The birthright of the faithful!—*their* world's wave
Soon swept them from its brink. Oh! deem thou not
That on the sad and consecrated spot
My soul grew weak! I tell thee that a power
Their kindled heart and lip—a fiery shower
My words were made—a might was given to prayer,
And a strong grasp to passionate despair,
And a dread triumph! Knowest thou what I sought?
For what high boon my struggling spirit wrought?
—Communion with the dead!—I sent a cry
Through the veiled empires of eternity,
A voice to cleave them! By the mournful truth,
By the lost promise of my blighted youth,
By the strong chain a mighty love can bind
On the beloved, the spell of mind o'er mind;
By words, which in themselves are magic high,
Armed and inspired, and winged with agony;
By tears, which comfort not, but burn, and seem
To bear the heart's blood in their passion-stream;
I summoned, I adjured—with quickened sense,
With the keen vigil of a life intense,
I watched, an answer from the winds to wring,
I listened, if perchance the stream might bring
Token from worlds afar: I taught *one* sound
Unto a thousand echoes—one profound
Imploring accent to the tomb, the sky—
One prayer to-night—"Awake, appear, reply!"
Hast thou been told that from the viewless bourne,
The dark way never hath allowed return?
That all, which tears can move, with life is fled—
That earthless love is powerless on the dead?
Believe it not!—there is a large lone star
Now burning o'er yon western hill afar,
And under its clear light there lies a spot
Which well might utter forth—believe it not!

I sat beneath that planet—I had wept
My woe to stillness, every night-wind slept ;
A hush was on the hills ; the very streams
Went by like clouds, or noiseless founts in dreams,
And the dark tree o'ershadowing me that hour,
Stood motionless, even as the gray church-tower
Whereon I gazed unconsciously : there came
A low sound, like the tremor of a flame,
Or like the light quick shiver of a wing,
Flitting through twilight woods, across the air ;
And I looked up ! Oh ! for strong words to bring
Conviction o'er thy thought ! Before me there,
He, the departed, stood ! Ay, face to face,
So near, and yet how far ! His form, his mien,
Gave to remembrance back each burning trace
Within :—Yet something awfully serene,
Pure, sculpture-like, on the pale brow, that wore
Of the once beating heart no token more ;
And stillness on the lip—and o'er the hair
A gleam, that trembled through the breathless air ;
And an unfathomed calm, that seemed to lie
In the grave sweetness of the illumined eye ;
Told of the gulfs between our being set,
And, as that unsheathed spirit-glance I met,
Made my soul faint :—with *fear?* Oh ! *not* with fear!
With the sick feeling that in *his* far sphere
My love could be as nothing ! But he spoke—
How shall I tell thee of the startling thrill
In that low voice, whose breezy tones could fill
My bosom's infinite ? O friend ! I woke
Then first to heavenly life ! Soft, solemn, clear,
Breathed the mysterious accents on mine ear,
Yet strangely seemed as if the while they rose
From depths of distance, o'er the wide repose
Of slumbering waters wafted, or the dells
Of mountains, hollow with sweet echo-cells ;
But, as they murmured on, the mortal chill
Passed from me, like mist before the morn,
And, to that glorious intercourse upborne
By slow degrees, a calm, divinely still,
Possessed my frame :—I sought that lighted eye
From its intense and searching purity
I drank in *soul!*—I questioned of the dead—
Of the hushed, starry shores their footsteps tread,
And I was answered. If remembrance there,
With dreamy whispers fill the immortal air ;
If thought, here piled from many a jewel-heap,
Be treasure in that pensive land to keep ;
If love, o'er sweeping change, and blight, and blast,
Find *there* the music of his home at last ;
I asked, and I was answered. Full and high
Was that communion with eternity,
Too rich for aught so fleeting ! Like a knell
Swept o'er my sense its closing words, " Farewell,

On earth we meet no more!" And all was gone—
The pale bright settled brow—the thrilling tone,
The still and shining eye! and never more
May twilight gloom or midnight hush restore
That radiant guest! One full-fraught hour of heaven,
To earthly passion's wild implorings given,
Was made my own—the ethereal fire hath shivered
The fragile censer in whose mould it quivered,
Brightly, consumingly! What now is left?
A faded world, of glory's hues bereft—
A void, a chain! I dwell 'midst throngs, apart,
In the cold silence of the stranger's heart;
A fixed, immortal shadow stands between
My spirit and life's fast-receding scene;
A gift hath severed me from human ties,
A power is gone from all earth's melodies,
Which never may return: their chords are broken,
The music of another land hath spoken—
No after-sound is sweet! This weary thirst!
And I have heard celestial fountains burst!—
What *here* shall quench it?

Dost thou not rejoice,
When the spring sends forth an awakening voice
Through the young woods? Thou dost! And in that birth
Of early leaves, and flowers, and songs of mirth,
Thousands, like thee, find gladness! Couldst thou know
How every breeze then summons *me* to go!
How all the light of love and beauty shed
By those rich hours, but wooes me to the dead!
The *only* beautiful that change no more—
The only loved!—the dwellers on the shore
Of spring fulfilled! The dead!—*whom* call we so?
They that breathe purer air, that feel, that know
Things wrapt from us! Away!—within me pent,
That which is barred from its own element
Still drops or struggles! But the day *will* come—
Over the deep the free bird finds its home,
And the stream lingers 'midst the rocks, yet greets
The sea at last! and the winged flower-seed meets
A soil to rest in: shall not *I*, too, be,
My spirit-love! up-borne to dwell with thee?
Yes! by the power whose conquering anguish stirred
The tomb, whose cry beyond the stars was heard,
Whose agony of triumph won thee back
Through the dim pass no mortal step may track,
Yet shall we meet!—that glimpse of joy divine
Proved thee forever and forever mine!

THE LADY OF PROVENCE.[1]

" Courage was cast about her like a dress
Of solemn comeliness,
A gathered mind and an untroubled face
Did give her dangers grace."—DONNE.

THE war-note of the Saracen
Was on the winds of France ;
It had stilled the harp of the Troubadour,
And the clash of the tourney's lance.

The sounds of the sea, and the sounds of the night,
And the hollow echoes of charge and flight,
Were around Clotilde, as she knelt to pray
In a chapel where the mighty lay,
On the old Provençal shore ;
Many a Chatillon beneath,
Unstirred by the ringing trumpet's breath,
His shroud of armor wore.
And the glimpses of moonlight that went and came
Through the clouds, like bursts of a dying flame,
Gave quivering life to the slumber pale
Of stern forms crouched in their marble mail,
At rest on the tombs of the knightly race,
The silent throngs of that burial-place.

They were imaged there with helm and spear,
As leaders in many a bold career—
And haughty their stillness looked and high,
Like a sleep whose dreams were of victory.
But meekly the voice of the lady rose
Through the trophies of their proud repose ;
Meekly, yet fervently, calling down aid,
Under their banners of battle she prayed ;
With her pale fair brow, and her eyes of love,
Upraised to the Virgin's portrayed above,
And her hair flung back, till it swept the grave
Of a Chatillon with its gleamy wave.
And her fragile frame, at every blast,
That full of the savage war-horn passed,
Trembling, as trembles a bird's quick heart,
When it vainly strives from its cage to part—
So knelt she in her woe ;
A weeper alone with the tearless dead—
Oh ! they reck not of tears o'er their quiet shed,
Or the dust that stirred below !

Hark ! a swift step ! she had caught its tone,
Through the dash of the sea, through the wild wind's moan ;
Is her lord returned with his conquering bands ?
No ! a breathless vassal before her stands !

[1] Founded on an incident in the early French history

—"Hast thou been on the field?—Art thou come from the host?"
—"From the slaughter, lady!—All, all is lost
Our banners are taken, our knights laid low,
Our spearmen chased by the Paynim foe;
And thy lord," his voice took a sadder sound—
"Thy lord—he is not on the bloody ground!
There are those who tell that the leader's plume
Was seen on the flight through the gathering gloom."
—A change o'er her mien and her spirit passed;
She ruled the heart which had beat so fast,
She dashed the tears from her kindling eye,
With a glance, as of sudden royalty:
The proud blood sprang in a fiery flow,
Quick o'er bosom, and cheek, and brow,
And her young voice rose till the peasant shook
At the thrilling tone and the falcon-look:
—"Dost thou stand by the tombs of the glorious dead
And fear not to say that their son hath fled?
Away! he is lying by lance and shield,—
Point me the path to his battle-field!"

The shadows of the forest
Are about the lady now;
She is hurrying through the midnight on,
Beneath the dark pine-bough.

There's a murmur of omens in every leaf,
There's a wail in the stream like the dirge of a chief,
The branches that rock to the tempest strife
Are groaning like things of troubled life;
The wind from the battle seems rushing by
With a funeral-march through the gloomy sky;
The pathway is rugged, and wild, and long,
But her fame in the daring of love is strong,
And her soul as on swelling seas upborne,
And girded all fearful things to scorn.

And fearful things were around her spread,
When she reached the field of the warrior dead:
There lay the noble, the valiant, low—
Ay! but *one* word speaks of deeper woe;
There lay the *loved*—on each fallen head
Mothers' vain blessings and tears had shed;
Sisters were watching in many a home
For the fettered footstep, no more to come;
Names in the prayer of that night were spoken,
Whose claim unto kindred prayer was broken;
And the fire was heaped, and the bright wine poured
For those, now needing nor hearth nor board;
Only a requiem, a shroud, a knell,
And oh! ye beloved of women, farewell!

Silently, with lips compressed,
Pale hands clasped above her breast,

Stately brow of anguish high,
Deathlike cheek, but dauntless eye;
Silently, o'er that red plain,
Moved the lady 'midst the slain.

Sometimes it seemed as a charging cry,
Or the ringing tramp of a steed came nigh;
Sometimes a blast of the Paynim horn,
Sudden and shrill from the mountains borne;
And her maidens trembled;—but on *her* ear
No meaning fell with those sounds of fear;
They had less of mastery to shake her now,
Than the quivering, erewhile, of an aspen bough.
She searched into many an unclosed eye,
That looked, without soul, to the starry sky;
She bowed down o'er many a shattered breast,
She lifted up helmet and cloven crest—
Not there, not there he lay!
"Lead where the most hath been dared and done,
Where the heart of the battle hath bled—lead on!"
And the vassal took the way.

He turned to a dark and lonely tree
That waved o'er a fountain red;
Oh! swiftest *there* had the currents free
From noble veins been shed.

Thickest there the spear-heads gleamed,
And the scattered plumage streamed,
And the broken shields were tossed,
And the shivered lances crossed,
And the mail-clad sleepers round
Made the harvest of that ground.

He was there! the leader amidst his band
Where the faithful had made their last vain stand;
He was there! but affection's glance alone
The darkly-changed in that hour had known;
With the falchion yet in his cold hand grasped,
And a banner of France to his bosom clasped,
And the form that of conflict bore fearful trace,
And the face—oh! speak not of that dead face!
As it lay to answer love's look no more,
Yet never so proudly loved before!

She quelled in her soul the deep floods of woe,
The time was not yet for their waves to flow;
She felt the full presence, the might of death,
Yet there came no sob with her struggling breath,
And a proud smile shone o'er her pale despair,
As she turned to his follower—"Your lord is there!
Look on him! know him by scarf and crest!—
Bear him away with his sires to rest!"

Another day, another night,
And the sailor on the deep
Hears the low chant of a funeral rite
From the lordly chapel sweep.

It comes with a broken and muffled tone,
As if that rite were in terror done :
Yet the song 'midst the seas hath a thrilling power,
And he knows 'tis a chieftain's burial hour.

Hurriedly, in fear and woe,
Through the aisle the mourners go ;
With a hushed and stealthy tread,
Bearing on the noble dead ;
Sheathed in armor of the field—
Only his wan face revealed,
Whence the still and solemn gleam
Doth a strange sad contrast seem
To the anxious eyes of that pale band,
With torches wavering in every hand,
For they dread each moment the shout of war,
And the burst of the Moslem cimeter.

There is no plumed head o'er the bier to bend,
No brother of battle, no princely friend :
No sound comes back like the sounds of yore,
Unto sweeping swords from the marble floor ;
By the red fountain the valiant lie,
The flower of Provençal chivalry ;
But *one* free step, and one lofty heart,
Bear through that scene to the last their part.

She hath led the death-train of the brave
To the verge of his own ancestral grave ;
She hath held o'er her spirit long rigid sway,
But the struggling passion must now have way ;
In the cheek, half seen through her mourning veil,
By turns does the swift blood flush and fail ;
The pride on the lip is lingering still,
But it shakes as a flame to the blast might thrill ;
Anguish and triumph are met at strife,
Rending the cords of the frail young life ;
And she sinks at last on her warrior's bier,
Lifting her voice, as if death might hear,
"I have won thy fame from the breath of wrong,
My soul hath risen for thy glory strong !
Now call me hence, by thy side to be,
The world thou leavest has no place for me.
The light goes with thee, the joy, the worth—
Faithful and tender ! Oh ! call me forth !

Give me my home on thy noble heart,—
Well have we loved, let us both depart ! "—

And pale on the breast of the dead she lay,
The living cheek to the cheek of clay ;
The *living* cheek !—Oh ! it was not vain,
That strife of the spirit to rend its chain ;
She is there at rest in her place of pride,
In death how queen-like—a glorious bride !

Joy for the freed one !—she might not stay
When the crown had fallen from her life away ;
She might not linger—a weary thing,
A dove with no home for its broken wing,
Thrown on the harshness of alien skies
That know not its own land's melodies.
From the long heart-withering early gone ;
She hath lived—she hath loved—her task is done !

THE CORONATION OF INEZ DE CASTRO.

"Tableau, ou l'Amour fait alliance avec la Tombe ; union redoutable de la mort et de la vie ! "—MADAME DE STAEL.

THERE was music on the midnight :
From a royal fane it rolled,
And a mighty bell, each pause between,
Sternly and slowly tolled.
Strange was their mingling in the sky,
It hushed the listener's breath ;
For the music spoke of triumph high,
The lonely bell, of death.

There was hurrying through the midnight
A sound of many feet ;
But they fell with a muffled fearfulness
Along the shadowy street :
And softer, fainter, grew their tread,
As it neared the minster gate,
Whence a broad and solemn light was shed
From a scene of royal state.

Full glowed the strong red radiance
In the centre of the nave,
Where the folds of a purple canopy
Swept down in many a wave ;
Loading the marble pavement old
With a weight of gorgeous gloom,
For something lay 'midst their fretted gold,
Like a shadow of the tomb.

And within that rich pavilion,
High on a glittering throne,
A woman's form sat silently
'Midst the glare of light alone.
Her jewelled robes fell strangely still,
The drapery on her breast
Seemed with no pulse beneath to thrill
So stonelike was its rest !

But a peal of lordly music
Shook e'en the dust below,
When the burning gold of the diadem
Was set on her pallid brow !
Then died away that haughty sound,
And from the encircling band
Stepped prince and chief, 'midst the hush profound,
With homage to her hand.

Why passed a faint, cold shudder
ing
Over each martial frame,
As one by one, to touch that hand,
Noble and leader came ?
Was not the settled aspect fair ?
Did not a queenly grace,
Under the parted ebon hair,
Sit on the pale still face ?

Death ! death ! canst *thou* be lovely
Unto the eye of life ?
Is not each pulse of the quick high
breast
With thy cold mien at strife ?
—It was a strange and fearful sight,
The crown upon that head,
The glorious robes, and the blaze of
light,
All gathered round the Dead !

And beside her stood in silence
One with a brow as pale,
And white lips rigidly compressed,
Lest the strong heart should fail :
King Pedro, with a jealous eye,
Watching the homage done,
By the land's flower and chivalry,
To her, his martyred one.

But on the face he looked not,
Which once his star had been ;
To every form his glance was
turned,
Save of the breathless queen ;
Though something, won from the
grave's embrace,
Of her beauty still was there,
Its hues were all of that shadowy
place,
It was not for *him* to bear.

Alas ! the crown, the sceptre,
The treasures of the earth,
And the priceless love that poured
those gifts,
Alike of wasted worth !
The rites are closed—bear back the
dead
Unto the chamber deep !
Lay down again the royal head,
Dust with the dust to sleep !

There is music on the midnight—
A requiem sad and slow,
As the mourners through the sound-
ing aisle
In dark procession go ;
And the ring of state, and the starry
crown,
And all the rich array,
Are borne to the house of silence
down,
With her, that queen of clay !

And tearlessly and firmly
King Pedro led the train ;
But his face was wrapt in his folding
robe,
When they lowered the dust
again.
'Tis hushed at last the tomb above,
Hymns die, and steps depart :
Who called thee strong as Death, O
Love ?
Mightier thou wast and art.

ITALIAN GIRL'S HYMN TO THE VIRGIN.

"O sanctissima, O purissima !
Dulcis Virgo Maria,
Mater amata, intemerata,
Ora, ora pro nobis."
Sicilian Mariner's Hymn.

In the deep hour of dreams.
Through the dark woods, and past
the moaning sea,
And by the star-light gleams,
Mother of sorrows ! lo, I come to
thee !
Unto thy shrine I bear
Night-blowing flowers, like my own
heart, to lie
All, all unfolded there,
Beneath the meekness of thy pity-
ing eye.

For thou, that once didst move,
In thy still beauty, through an early home,
Thou knowest the grief, the love,
The fear of woman's soul ;—to thee I come !

Many, and sad, and deep,
Were the thoughts folded in thy silent breast ;
Thou, too, couldst watch and weep—
Hear, gentlest mother ! hear a heart oppressed !

There is a wandering bark
Bearing one from me o'er the restless wave :
Oh ! let thy soft eye mark
His course ;—be with him, holiest, guide and save !

My soul is on that way ;
My thoughts are travellers o'er the waters dim ;
Through the long weary day
I walk, o'ershadowed by vain dreams of him.

Aid him—and me, too, aid !
Oh ! 'tis not well, this earthly love's excess !
On thy weak child is laid
The burden of too deep a tenderness.

Too much o'er *him* is poured
My being's hope—scarce leaving Heaven a part ;
Too faithfully adored,
Oh ! make not him the chastener of my heart !

I tremble with a sense
Of grief to be ;—I hear a warning low—
Sweet mother ! call me hence !
This wild idolatry must end in woe.

The troubled joy of life,
Love's lightning happiness, my soul hath known ;
And, worn with feverish strife,
Would fold its wings ; take back, take back thine own !

Hark ! how the wind swept by !
The tempest's voice comes rolling o'er the wave—
Hope of the sailor's eye,
And maiden's heart, blest mother, guide and save !

TO A DEPARTED SPIRIT.

From the bright stars, or from the viewless air,
Or from some world unreached by human thought.
Spirit, sweet spirit ! if thy home be there,
And if thy visions with the past be fraught,
Answer me, answer me !

Have we not communed here of life and death ?
Have we not said that love, such love as ours,
Was not to perish as a rose's breath,
To melt away, like song from festal bowers ?
Answer, oh ! answer me !

Thine eye's last light was mine—the soul that shone
Intensely, mournfully, through gathering haze—
Didst thou bear with thee to the shore unknown,
Nought of what lived in that long, earnest gaze !
Hear, hear, and answer me !

Thy voice—its low, soft, fervent, farewell tone
Thrilled through the tempest of the parting strife,
Like a faint breeze :—oh, from that music flown,
Send back *one* sound, if love's be quenchless life,
But once, oh ! answer me !

In the still noontide, in the sunset's hush,
In the dead hour of night, when thought grows deep,
When the heart's phantoms from the darkness rush,
Fearfully beautiful, to strive with sleep—
Spirit ! then answer me !

By the remembrance of our blended prayer ;
By all our tears, whose mingling made them sweet ;
By our last hope, the victor o'er despair :—
Speak ! if our souls in deathless yearnings meet ;
Answer me, answer me !

The grave is silent :—and the far-off sky,
And the deep midnight—silent all, and lone !
Oh ! if thy buried love make no reply,
What voice has earth !—Hear, pity, speak, mine own !
Answer me, answer me !

THE CHAMOIS HUNTER'S LOVE.

"For all his wildness and proud phantasies,
I love him !"—CROLY.

THY heart is in the upper world, where fleet the chamois bounds,
Thy heart is where the mountain-fir shakes to the torrent sounds ;
And where the snow-peaks gleam like stars, through the stillness of the air,
And where the Lauwine's[1] peal is heard—Hunter ! thy heart is there !

I know thou lovest me well, dear friend ! but better, better far,
Thou lovest that high and haughty life, with rocks and storms at war ;
In the green sunny vales with me, thy spirit would but pine,
And yet I will be thine, my love ! and yet I will be thine !

And I will not seek to woo thee down from those thy native heights,
With the sweet song, our land's own song, of pastoral delights ;
For thou must live as eagles live, thy path is not as mine,
And yet I will be thine, my love ! and yet I will be thine !

And I will leave my blessèd home, my father's joyous hearth,
With all the voices meeting there in tenderness and mirth,
With all the kind and laughing eyes that in its firelight shine,
To sit forsaken in thy hut, yet know that thou art mine !

[1] *Lauwine*, the avalanche.

It is my youth, it is my bloom, it is my glad free heart,
That I cast away for thee—for thee, all reckless as thou art!
With tremblings and with vigils lone, I bind myself to dwell,
Yet, yet I would not change that lot, oh no! I love too well!

A mournful thing is love which grows to one so wild as thou,
With that bright restlessness of eye, that tameless fire of brow!
Mournful!—but dearer far I call its mingled fear and pride,
And the trouble of its happiness, than aught on earth beside.

To listen for thy step in vain, to start at every breath,
To watch through long long nights of storm, to sleep and dream of death,
To wake in doubt and loneliness—this doom I know is mine,
And yet I will be thine, my love! and yet I will be thine!

That I may greet thee from thine Alps, when thence thou comest at last,
That I may hear thy thrilling voice tell o'er each danger past,
That I may kneel and pray for thee, and win thee aid divine—
For this I will be thine, my love! for this I will be thine!

THE INDIAN WITH HIS DEAD CHILD.[1]

In the silence of the midnight
I journey with my dead;
In the darkness of the forest-boughs
A lonely path I tread.

But my heart is high and fearless,
As by mighty wings upborne;
The mountain eagle hath not plumes
So strong as love and scorn.

I have raised thee from the grave sod,
By the white man's path defiled;
On to the ancestral wilderness
I bear thy dust, my child!

I have asked the ancient deserts
To give my dead a place,
Where the stately footsteps of the free
Alone should leave a trace.

And the tossing pines made answer—
"Go, bring us back thine own!"
And the streams from all the hunters' hills
Rushed with an echoing tone.

Thou shalt rest by sounding waters
That yet untamed may roll;
The voices of that chainless host
With joy shall fill thy soul.

In the silence of the midnight
I journey with the dead,
Where the arrows of my father's bow
Their falcon flight have sped.

I have left the spoilers' dwellings
For evermore behind;
Unmingled with their household sounds,
For me shall sweep the wind.

[1] An Indian, who had established himself in a township of Maine, feeling indignantly the want of sympathy evinced towards him by the white inhabitants, particularly on the death of his only child, gave up his farm soon afterwards, dug up the body of his child and carried it with him two hundred miles through the forests to join the Canadian Indians.—See Tudor's *Letters on the Eastern States of America.*

Alone, amidst their hearth-fires,
I watched my child's decay ;
Uncheered, I saw the spirit-light
From his young eyes fade away.

When his head sank on my bosom,
When the death-sleep o'er him fell,
Was there one to say, "A friend is near ?"
There was none !—pale race, farewell !

To the forests, to the cedars,
To the warrior and his bow,
Back, back !—I bore thee laughing thence,
I bear thee slumbering now !

I bear thee unto burial
With the mighty hunters gone ;
I shall hear thee in the forest-breeze,
Thou wilt speak of joy, my son !

In the silence of the midnight
I journey with the dead ;
But my heart is strong, my step is fleet,
My father's path I tread.

SONG OF EMIGRATION.

THERE was heard a song on the chiming sea,
A mingled breathing of grief and glee ;
Man's voice, unbroken by sighs, was there,
Filling with triumph the sunny air ;
Of fresh green lands, and of pastures new,
It sang, while the bark through the surges flew.

But ever and anon
A murmur of farewell
Told, by its plaintive tone,
That from woman's lip it fell.

"Away, away o'er the foaming main !"
This was the free and the joyous strain ;
"There are clearer skies than ours, afar,
We will shape our course by a brighter star ;
There are plains whose verdure no foot hath pressed
And whose wealth is all for the first brave guest."

"But, alas ! that we should go,"
Sang the farewell voices then,
"From the homesteads, warm and low,
By the brook and in the glen !"

"We will rear new homes under trees that glow,
As if gems were the fruitage of every bough ;
O'er our white walls we will train the vine,
And sit in its shadow at day's decline ;
And watch our herds, as they range at will
Through the green savannas, all bright and still.

"But woe for that sweet shade
Of the flowering orchard trees,
Where first our children played
'Midst the birds and honey-bees !"

"All, all our own shall the forests be,
As to the bound of the roebuck free!
None shall say, 'Hither, no further pass!'
We will track each step through the wavy grass;
We will chase the elk in his speed and might,
And bring proud spoils to the hearth at night."

"But, oh! the gray church tower,
And the sound of Sabbath-bell,
And the sheltered garden bower,
We have bid them all farewell!"

"We will give the names of our fearless race
To each bright river whose course we trace;
We will leave our memory with mounts and floods,
And the path of our daring in boundless woods!
And our works unto many a lake's green shore,
Where the Indians' graves lay, alone, before."

"But who shall teach the flowers
Which our children loved, to dwell,
In a soil that is not ours?
—Home, home and friends, farewell!'

THE KING OF ARRAGON'S LAMENT FOR HIS BROTHER.[1]

"If I could see him, it were well with me."
COLERIDGE'S *Wallenstein.*

THERE were lights and sounds of revelling in the vanquished city halls,
As by night the feast of victory was held within its walls,
And the conquerors filled the wine-cup high, after years of bright blood-shed;
But their lord, the King of Arragon, 'midst the triumph, wailed the dead.

He looked down from the fortress won, on the tents and towers below,
The moonlit sea, the torchlit streets—and a gloom came o'er his brow:
The voice of thousands floated up, with the horn and cymbal's tone;
But his heart, 'midst that proud music, felt more utterly alone.

And he cried, "Thou art mine, fair city! thou city of the sea!
But, oh! what portion of delight is mine at last in thee?—
I am lonely 'midst thy palaces, while the glad waves past them roll,
And the soft breath of thine orange-bowers is mournful to my soul.

"My brother! oh, my brother! thou art gone—the true and brave,
And the haughty joy of victory hath died upon thy grave;
There are many round my throne to stand, and to march where I lead on
There was *one* to *love* me in the world—my brother! thou art gone!

[1] The grief of Ferdinand, King of Arragon, for the loss of his brother, Don Pedro, who was killed during the siege of Naples, is affectingly described by the historian Mariana. It is also the subject of one of the old Spanish Ballads in Lockhart's beautiful collection.

"In the desert, in the battle, in the ocean-tempest's wrath,
We stood together, side by side; one hope was ours—one path;
Thou hast wrapped me in thy soldier's cloak, thou hast fenced me with thy breast;
Thou hast watched beside my couch of pain—oh! bravest heart, and best!

"I see the festive lights around—o'er a dull sad world they shine;
I hear the voice of victory—my Pedro! where is *thine?*
The only voice in whose kind tone my spirit found reply!—
Oh, brother! I have bought too dear this hollow pageantry!

"I have hosts, and gallant fleets, to spread my glory and my sway,
And chiefs to lead them fearlessly—my *friend* hath passed away!
For the kindly look, the word of cheer, my heart may thirst in vain,
And the face that was as light to mine—it cannot come again!

"I have made thy blood, thy faithful blood, the offering for a crown;
With love, which earth bestows not twice, I have purchased cold renown!
How often will my weary heart 'midst the sounds of triumph die,
When I think of thee, my brother! thou flower of chivalry!

"I am lonely—I am lonely! this rest is even as death!
Let me hear again the ringing spears, and the battle-trumpet's breath;
Let me see the fiery charger foam, and the royal banner wave—
But where art thou, my brother?—in thy low and early grave!"

And louder swelled the songs of joy through that victorious night,
And faster flowed the red wine forth, by the stars' and torches' light
But low and deep, amidst the mirth, was heard the conqueror's moan—
"My brother! oh, my brother! best and bravest! thou art gone!"

THE RETURN.

"Hast thou come with the heart of thy childhood back,
The free, the pure, the kind?"
So murmured the trees in my homeward track,
As they played to the mountain-wind.

"Hath thy soul been true to its early love?"
Whispered my native streams:
"Hath the spirit nursed amidst hill and grove,
Still revered its first high dreams?"

"Hast thou borne in thy bosom the holy prayer
Of the child in his parent-halls?"
Thus breathed a voice on the thrilling air
From the old ancestral walls.

"Hast thou kept thy faith with the faithful dead,
Whose place of rest is nigh?
With the father's blessing o'er thee shed,
With the mother's trusting eye?"

Then my tears gushed forth in sudden rain,
As I answered—"O, ye shades!
I bring not my childhood's heart again
To the freedom of your glades.

"I have turned from my first pure love aside,
O bright and happy streams!
Light after light, in my soul have died
The day-spring's glorious dreams.

"And the holy prayer from my thoughts hath passed—
The prayer at my mother's knee;
Darkened and troubled I come at last,
Home of my boyish glee!

"But I bear from my childhood a gift of tears,
To soften and atone;
And oh! ye scenes of those blessed years,
They shall make me again your own."

THE VAUDOIS WIFE.[1]

"Clasp me a little longer, on the brink
Of fate! while I can feel thy dear caress;
And when this heart hath ceased to beat, oh! think—
And let it mitigate thy woe's excess—
That thou hast been to me all tenderness,
And friend, to more than human friendship just.
Oh! by that retrospect of happiness,
And by the hopes of an immortal trust,
God shall assuage thy pangs when I am laid in dust."
Gertrude of Wyoming.

THY voice is in mine ear, beloved!
Thy look is in my heart,
Thy bosom is my resting-place,
And yet I must depart.
Earth on my soul is strong—too strong—
Too precious is its chain,
All woven of thy love, dear friend,
Yet vain, though mighty, vain!

Thou seest mine eye grow dim, beloved!
Thou seest my life-blood flow.
Bow to the chastener silently,
And calmly let me go!
A little while between our hearts
The shadowy gulf must lie,
Yet have we for their communing
Still, still Eternity!

Alas! thy tears are on my cheek,
My spirit they detain;
I know that from thine agony
Is wrung that burning rain.
Best, kindest, weep not: make the pang,
The bitter conflict, less—
Oh! sad it is, and yet a joy,
To feel thy love's excess!

But calm thee! Let the thought of death
A solemn peace restore!
The voice that must be silent soon
Would speak to thee once more,
That thou mayst bear its blessing on
Through years of after life—
A token of consoling love,
Even from this hour of strife.

[1] The wife of a Vaudois leader, in one of the attacks made on the Protestant hamlets, received a mortal wound, and died in her husband's arms, exhorting him to courage and endurance.

I bless thee for the noble heart,
The tender, and the true,
Where mine hath found the happiest rest
That e'er fond woman's knew ;
I bless thee, faithful friend and guide,
For my own, my treasured share,
In the mournful secrets of thy soul,
In thy sorrow, in thy prayer.

I bless thee for kind looks and words
Showered on my path like dew,
For all the love in those deep eyes !
A gladness ever new !
For the voice which ne'er to mine replied
But in kindly tones of cheer ;
For every spring of happiness
My soul hath tasted here !

I bless thee for the last rich boon
Won from affection tried,
The right to gaze on death with thee,
To perish by thy side !
And yet more for the glorious hope
Even to *these* moments given—
Did not *thy* spirit ever lift—
The trust of *mine* to Heaven ?

Now be *thou* strong ! Oh, knew we not
Our path must lead to this !
A shadow and a trembling still
Were mingled with our bliss !
We plighted our young hearts when storms
Were dark upon the sky,
In full, deep knowledge of their task
To suffer and to die !

Be strong ! I leave the living voice
Of this, my martyred blood,
With the thousand echoes of the hills,
With the torrent's foaming flood ;
A spirit 'midst the caves to dwell,
A token on the air,
To rouse the valiant from repose,
The fainting from despair.

Hear it, and bear thou on, my love !
Ay, joyously endure !
Our mountains must be altars yet,
Inviolate and pure ;
There must our God be worshipped still
With the worship of the free :
Farewell !—there's but *one* pang in death,
One only—leaving thee !

THE GUERILLA LEADER'S VOW.

"All my pretty ones !
Did you say all ?
* * * *
Let us make medicine of this great revenge,
To cure this deadly grief ! "

Macbeth.

My battle-vow !—no minster walls
Gave back the burning word,
Nor cress nor shrine the low deep tone
Of smothered vengeance heard :
But the ashes of a ruined home
Thrilled, as it sternly rose,
With the mingling voice of blood that shook
The midnight's dark repose.

I breathed it not o'er kingly tombs,
But where my children lay,
And the startled vulture at my step
Soared from their precious clay.
I stood amidst my dead alone—
I kissed their lips—I poured,
In the strong silence of that hour,
My spirit on my sword.

The roof-tree fallen, the smoulder-
ing floor,
The blackened threshold-stone,
The bright hair torn, and soiled
with blood,
Whose fountain was my own ;
These, and the everlasting hills,
Bore witness that wild night ;
Before them rose the avenger's soul,
In crushed affection's might.

The stars, the searching stars of
heaven
With keen looks would upbraid,
If from my heart the fiery vow,
Seared on it then, could fade.
They have no cause !—Go, ask the
streams
That by my path have swept,
The red waves that unstained were
borne—
How hath my faith been kept ?

And other eyes are on my soul,
That never, never close,
The sad, sweet glances of the
lost—
They leave me no repose.
Haunting my night-watch 'midst
the rocks,
And by the torrent's foam,
Through the dark-rolling mists they
shine,
Full, full of love and home !

Alas ! the mountain eagle's heart,
When wronged, may yet find
rest ;
Scorning the place made desolate,
He seeks another nest.
But I—your soft looks wake the
thirst
That wins no quenching rain ;
Ye drive me back, my beautiful !
To the stormy fight again.

THEKLA AT HER LOVER'S GRAVE.[1]

"Thither where he lies buried !
That single spot is the whole world to me."
COLERIDGE'S *Wallenstein.*

THY voice was in my soul ! it called me on ;
O my lost friend ! thy voice was in my soul :
From the cold, faded world whence thou art gone,
To hear no more life's troubled billows roll,
I come, I come !

Now speak to me again ! we loved so well—
We *loved !* oh ! still, I know that still we love !
I have left all things with thy dust to dwell,
Through these dim aisles in dreams of *thee* to rove :
This is my home !

Speak to me in the thrilling minster's gloom !
Speak ! thou hast died, and sent me no farewell !
I will not shrink ; oh ! mighty is the tomb,
But one thing mightier, which it cannot quell,
This woman's heart !

This lone, full, fragile heart !—the strong alone
In love and grief—of both the burning shrine !
Thou, my soul's friend ! with grief hast surely done,
But with the love which made thy spirit mine,
Say, couldst thou part ?——

[1] See *Wallenstein*, Act 6th.

I hear the rustling banners ; and I hear
The wind's low singing through the fretted stone ;
I hear not *thee;* and yet I feel thee near—
What is this bound that keeps thee from thine own ?
Breathe it away !

I wait thee—I adjure thee ! hast thou known
How I have loved thee ? couldst thou dream it all ?
Am I not here, with night and death alone,
And fearing not ? and hath my spirit's call
O'er thine no sway ?

Thou *canst* not come ! or thus I should not weep !
Thy love is deathless—but no longer free !
Soon would its wing triumphantly o'ersweep
The viewless barrier, if such power might be,
Soon, soon, and fast !

But I shall come to thee ! our soul's deep dreams,
Our young affections, have not gushed in vain ;
Soon in one tide shall blend the severed streams,
The worn heart break its bonds—and death and pain
Be with the past !

THE SISTERS OF SCIO.

" As our hearts, our way is one,
And cannot be divided. Strong affection
Contends with all things and o'ercometh all things.
Will I not live with thee ? will I not cheer thee ?
Wouldst thou be lonely then ? wouldst thou be sad ?"
JOANNA BAILLIE.

" SISTER, sweet sister ! let me weep awhile !
Bear with me—give the sudden passion way !
Thoughts of our own lost home, our sunny isle,
Come, as a wind that o'er a reed hath sway ;
Till my heart dies with yearnings and sick fears !
Oh ! could my life melt from me in these tears !

" Our father's voice, our mother's gentle eye,
Our brother's bounding step—where are they, where ?
Desolate, desolate our chambers lie !
How hast *thou* won thy spirit from despair ?
O'er *mine* swift shadows, gusts of terror, sweep ;—
I sink away—bear with me—let me weep !"

" Yes ! weep, my sister ! weep, till from thy heart
The weight flow forth in tears ! yet sink thou not ;
I bind my sorrow to a lofty part,
For thee, my gentle one ! our orphan lot
To meet in quenchless trust ; my soul is strong—
Thou, too, wilt rise in holy might ere long.

"A breath of our free heavens and noble sires,
A memory of our old victorious dead,—
These mantle me with power! and though their fires
In a frail censer briefly may be shed,
Yet shall they light us onward, side by side;
Have the wild birds, and have not *we*, a guide?

"Cheer, then, beloved! on whose meek brow is set
Our mother's image—in whose voice a tone,
A faint sweet sound of hers is lingering yet,
An echo of our childhood's music gone;—
Cheer thee! thy sister's heart and faith are high;
Our path is one—with thee I live and die!"

BERNARDO DEL CARPIO.

[The celebrated Spanish champion, Bernardo del Carpio, having made many ineffectual efforts to procure the release of his father, the Count Saldana, who had been imprisoned by King Alfonso of Asturias, almost from the time of Bernardo's birth, at last took up arms in despair. The war which he maintained proved so destructive, that the men of the land gathered round the King, and united in demanding Saldana's liberty. Alfonso, accordingly, offered Bernardo immediate possession of his father's person in exchange for his castle of Carpio. Bernardo, without hesitation, gave up his stronghold, with all his captives; and being assured that his father was then on his way from prison, rode forth with the King to meet him. And when he saw his father approaching, he exclaimed, says the ancient chronicle, "Oh, God! is the Count of Saldana indeed coming?"—"Look where he is," replied the cruel King, "and now go and greet him whom you have so long desired to see." The remainder of the story will be found related in the ballad. The chronicles and romances leave us nearly in the dark as to Bernardo's history after this event.]

The warrior bowed his crested head, and tamed his heart of fire,
And sued the haughty king to free his long-imprisoned sire;
"I bring thee here my fortress keys, I bring my captive train,
I pledge thee faith, my liege, my lord!—oh, break my father's chain!"

"Rise, rise! even now they father comes, a ransomed man this day:
Mount thy good horse, and thou and I will meet him on his way."
Then lightly rose that loyal son, and bounded on his steed,
And urged, as if with lance in rest, the charger's foamy speed.

And lo! from afar, as on thy pressed, there came a glittering band,
With one that midst them stately rode, as a leader in the land;
"Now haste, Bernardo, haste! for there, in very truth is he,
The father whom thy faithful heart hath yearned so long to see."

His dark eye flashed, his proud breast heaved, his cheek's blood came and went;
He reached that gray-haired chieftain's side, and there, dismounting, bent;
A lowly knee to earth he bent, his father's hand he took,—
What was there in its touch that all his fiery spirit shook?

That hand was cold—a frozen thing—it dropped from his like lead,—
He looked up to the face above—the face was of the dead!
A plume waved o'er the noble brow—the brow was fixed and white—
He met at last his father's eyes—but in them was no sight!

Up from the ground he sprang, and gazed, but who could paint that gaze?
They hushed their very hearts, that saw its horror and amaze ;
They might have chained him, as before that stony form he stood,
For the power was stricken from his arm, and from his lip the blood.

"Father!" at length he murmured low—and wept like childhood then,—
Talk not of grief till thou hast seen the tears of warlike men!—
He thought on all his glorious hopes, and all his young renown,—
He flung the falchion from his side, and in the dust sate down.

Then covering with his steel-gloved hands his darkly mournful brow,
"No more, there is no more," he said, "to lift the sword for now.
My king is false, my hope betrayed, my father,—oh! the worth,
The glory, and the loveliness, are passed away from earth!

"I thought to stand where banners waved, my sire! beside thee yet,
I would that *there* our kindred blood on Spain's free soil had met,—
Thou wouldst have known my spirit then—for thee my fields were won,—
And thou hast perished in thy chains, as though thou hadst no son!"

Then, starting from the ground once more, he seized the monarch's rein,
Amidst the pale and 'wildered looks of all the courtier train ;
And with a fierce, o'ermastering grasp, the rearing war-horse led,
And sternly set them face to face—the king before the dead!

"Came I not forth, upon thy pledge, my father's hand to kiss?
Be still and gaze thou on, false king! and tell me what is this!
The voice, the glance, the heart I sought—give answer, where are they?
If thou wouldst clear thy perjured soul, send life through this cold clay!

"Into these glassy eyes put light—be still! keep down thine ire,
Bid these white lips a blessing speak—this earth is *not* my sire!
Give me back him for whom I strove, for whom my blood was shed,—
Thou canst not?—and a king!—his dust be mountains on thy head!"

He loosed the steed ; his slack hand fell—upon the silent face
He cast one long, deep, troubled look—then turned from that sad place :
His hope was crushed, his after-fate untold in martial strain,
His banner led the spears no more amidst the hills of Spain.

THE TOMB OF MADAME LANGHANS.[1]

"To a mysteriously consorted pair
This place is consecrate; to death and life,
And to the best affections that proceed
From this conjunction."

WORDSWORTH.

How many hopes were borne upon thy bier,
O bride of stricken love! in anguish hither!
Like flowers, the first and fairest of the year,
Plucked on the bosom of the dead to wither ;

[1] At Hindlebank, near Berne, she is represented as bursting from the sepulchre, with her infant in her arms, at the sound of the last trumpet. An inscription on the tomb concludes thus :—"Here am I, O God! with the child whom thou hast given me."

Hopes from their source all holy, though of earth,
All brightly gathering round affection's hearth.

Of mingled prayer they told : of Sabbath hours ;
Of morn's farewell, and evening's blessed meeting ;
Of childhood's voice, amidst the household bowers ;
And bounding step, and smile of joyous greeting ;—
But thou, young mother ! to thy gentle heart
Didst take thy babe, and meekly so depart.

How many hopes have sprung in radiance hence !
Their trace yet lights the dust where thou art sleeping !
A solemn joy comes o'er me, and a sense
Of triumph, blent with nature's gush of weeping,
As, kindling up the silent stone, I see
The glorious vision, caught by faith, of thee.

Slumberer ! love calls thee, for the night is past :
Put on the immortal beauty of thy waking !
Captive ! and hear'st thou not the trumpet's blast,
The long, victorious note, thy bondage breaking !
Thou hear'st, thou answer'st, " God of earth and heaven !
Here am I, with the child whom Thou hast given !"

THE EXILE'S DIRGE.

" Fear no more the heat o' the sun,
Nor the furious winter's rages,
Thou thy worldly task hast done,
Home art gone and ta'en thy wages."
Cymbeline.

["I attended a funeral where there were a number of the German settlers present. After I had performed such service as is usual on similar occasions, a most venerable-looking old man came forward, and asked me if I were willing that they should perform some of their peculiar rites. He opened a very ancient version of Luther's Hymns, and they all began to sing, in German, so loud that the woods echoed the strain. There was something affecting in the singing of these ancient people, carrying one of their brethren to his last home, and using the language and rites which they had brought with them over the sea from the *Vaterland*, a word which often occurred in this hymn. It was a long, slow, and mournful air, which they sung as they bore the body along : the words '*mein Gott*,' '*mein Bruder*,' and '*Vaterland*,' died away in distant echoes amongst the woods. I shall long remember that funeral hymn."—FLINT'S *Recollections of the Valley of the Mississippi.*]

THERE went a dirge through the forest's gloom—
An exile was borne to a lonely tomb.

" Brother !" (so the chant was sung
In the slumberer's native tongue),
" Friend and brother ! not for thee
Shall the sound of weeping be :
Long the exile's woe hath lain
On thy life a withering chain ;
Music from thine own blue streams,
Wandered through thy fever-dreams ;
Voices from thy country's vines
Met thee 'midst the alien pines ;
And thy true heart died away,
And thy spirit would not stay."

So swelled the chant ; and the deep wind's moan
Seemed through the cedars to murmur—" *Gone !* "

"Brother! by the rolling Rhine
Stands the home that once was thine.
Brother! now thy dwelling lies
Where the Indian arrow flies!
He that blessed thine infant head,
Fills a distant greensward bed;
She that heard thy lisping prayer,
Slumbers low beside him there;
They that earliest with thee played,
Rest beneath their own oak shade,
Far, far hence!—yet sea nor shore
Haply, brother! part ye more;
God hath called thee to that band
In the immortal Fatherland!"

"The *Fatherland!*" with that sweet word
A burst of tears 'midst the strain was heard.

"Brother! were we there with thee,
Rich would many a meeting be!
Many a broken garland bound,
Many a mourned and lost one found!
But our task is still to bear,
Still to breathe in changeful air
Loved and bright things to resign,
As even now this dust of thine;
Yet to hope!—to hope in heaven,
Though flowers fall, and ties be riven;
Yet to pray! and wait the hand
Beckoning to the Fatherland!"

And the requiem died in the forest's gloom;
They had reached the exile's lonely tomb.

THE DREAMING CHILD.

"Alas! what kind of grief should thy years know?
Thy brow and cheek are smooth as waters be
When no breath troubles them."
BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

AND is there sadness in *thy* dreams, my boy?
What should the cloud be made of?—blessed child!
Thy spirit, borne upon a breeze of joy,
All day hath ranged through sunshine, clear, yet mild.

And now thou tremblest!—wherefore?—in *thy* soul
There lies no past, no future. Thou hast heard
No sound of presage from the distance roll,
Thy heart bears traces of no arrowy word.

From thee no love hath gone; thy mind's young eye
Hath looked not into death's, and thence become
A questioner of mute eternity,
A weary searcher for a viewless home:

Nor hath thy sense been quickened unto pain,
By feverish watching for some step beloved;
Free are thy thoughts, an ever-changeful train,
Glancing like dew-drops, and as lightly moved.

Yet now, on billows of strange passion tossed,
How art thou wildered in the cave of sleep!
My gentle child! 'midst what dim phantoms lost,
Thus in mysterious anguish dost thou weep?

Awake ! they sadden me—those early tears,
First gushings of the strong dark river's flow,
That *must* o'ersweep thy soul with coming years,
The unfathomable flood of human woe !

Awful to watch, even rolling through a dream,
Forcing wild spray-drops but from childhood's eyes !
Wake, wake ! as yet *thy* life's transparent stream
Should wear the tinge of none but summer skies.

Come from the shadow of those realms unknown,
Where now thy thoughts dismayed and darkling rove ;
Come to the kindly region all thine own,
The home, still bright for thee with guardian love.

Happy, fair child ! that yet a mother's voice
Can win thee back from visionary strife !
Oh, shall *my* soul, thus wakened to rejoice,
Start from the dream-like wilderness of life ?

THE CHARMED PICTURE.

" Oh ! that those lips had language ! Life hath passed
With me but roughly since I saw thee last."
COWPER.

THINE eyes are charmed—thine earnest eyes—
Thou image of the dead !
A spell within their sweetness lies,
A virtue thence is shed.

Oft in their meek blue light enshrined
A blessing seems to be,
And sometimes there my wayward mind
A still reproach can see :

And sometimes pity, soft and deep,
And quivering through a tear ;
Even as if love in heaven could weep,
For grief left drooping here.

And oh, my spirit needs that balm !
Needs it 'midst fitful mirth !
And in the night-hour's haunted calm,
And by the lonely hearth.

Look on me *thus*, when hollow praise
Hath made the weary pine
For one true tone of other days,
One glance of love like thine !

Look on me *thus*, when sudden glee
Bears my quick heart along,
On wings that struggle to be free,
As bursts of skylark song.

In vain, in vain !—too soon are felt
The wounds they cannot flee ;
Better in childlike tears to melt,
Pouring my soul on thee !

Sweet face, that o'er my childhood shone,
Whence is thy power of change,
Thus ever shadowing back my own,
The rapid and the strange ?

Whence are they charmed—those earnest eyes ?
I know the mystery well !
In mine own trembling bosom lies
The spirit of the spell !

Of Memory, Conscience, Love, 'tis born—
Oh ! change no longer, thou !
Forever be the blessing worn
On thy pure thoughtful brow

PARTING WORDS.

"One struggle more and I am free."
BYRON.

LEAVE me, oh ! leave me !—unto all below
Thy presence binds me with too deep a spell ;
Thou makest those mortal regions, whence I go,
Too mighty in their loveliness—farewell,
That I may part in peace !

Leave me !—thy footstep with its lightest sound,
The very shadow of thy waving hair,
Wakes in my soul a feeling too profound,
Too strong for aught that loves and dies, to bear—
Oh ! bid the conflict cease !

I hear thy whisper—and the warm tears gush
Into mine eyes, the quick pulse thrills my heart ;
Thou biddest the peace, the reverential hush,
The still submission, from my thoughts depart ;
Dear one ! this must not be.

The past looks on me from thy mournful eye,
The beauty of our free and vernal days,
Our communings with sea, and hill, and sky—
Oh ! take that bright world from my spirit's gaze.
Thou art all earth to me !

Shut out the sunshine from my dying room,
The jasmine's breath, the murmur of the bee ;
Let not the joy of bird-notes pierce the gloom !
They speak of love, of summer, and of thee,
Too much—and death is here !

Doth our own spring make happy music now,
From the old beech-roots flashing into day ?
Are the pure lilies imaged in its flow ?
Alas ! vain thoughts ! that fondly thus can stray
From the dread hour so near !

If I could but draw courage from the light
Of thy clear eye, that ever shone to bliss !—
Not now ! 'twill not be now !—my aching sight
Drinks from that fount a flood of tenderness,
Bearing all strength away !

Leave me !—thou comest between my heart and Heaven ;
I would be still, in voiceless prayer to die !
Why must our souls thus love, and then be riven !
Return ! thy parting wakes mine agony !
Oh, yet awhile delay !

THE MESSAGE TO THE DEAD.[1]

THOU'RT passing hence, my brother !
Oh ! my earliest friend, farewell !
Thou'rt leaving me, without thy voice,
In a lonely home to dwell ;
And from the hills, and from the hearth,
And from the household tree,
With thee departs the lingering mirth,
The brightness goes with thee.

But thou, my friend, my brother !
Thou'rt speeding to the shore
Where the dirge-like tone of parting words
Shall smite the soul no more !
And thou wilt see our holy dead,
The lost on earth and main :
Into the sheaf of kindred hearts
Thou wilt be bound again !

Tell, then, our friend of boyhood,
That yet his name is heard
On the blue mountains, whence his youth
Passed like a swift bright bird.
The light of his exulting brow,
The vision of his glee,
Are on me still—oh ! still I trust
That smile again to see.

And tell our fair young sister,
The rose cut down in spring,
That yet my gushing soul is filled
With lays she loved to sing.
Her soft deep eyes look through in dreams,
Tender and sadly sweet ;—
Tell her my heart within me burns
Once more that gaze to meet.

And tell our white-haired father,
That in the paths he trode,
The child he loved, the last on earth,
Yet walks and worships God.
Say, that his last fond blessing yet
Rests on my soul like dew,
And by its hallowing might I trust
Once more his face to view.

And tell our gentle mother,
That on her grave I pour
The sorrows of my spirit forth,
As on her breast of yore.
Happy thou art that soon, how soon,
Our good and bright will see !—
Oh ! brother, brother ! may I dwell,
Ere long, with them and thee !

THE TWO HOMES.

" Oh ! if the soul immortal be,
Is not its love immortal too ? "

SEES'T thou my home ?—'tis where yon woods are waving,
In their dark richness, to the summer air,
Where yon blue stream, a thousand flower-banks laving,
Leads down the hill a vein of light,—'tis there !

'Midst those green wilds how many a fount lies gleaming,
Fringed with the violet, colored with the skies !
My boyhood's haunt, through days of summer dreaming,
Under young leaves that shook with melodies.

[1] " Messages from the living to the dead are not uncommon in the Highlands. The Gaels have such a ceaseless consciousness of immortality, that their departed friends are considered as merely absent for a time, and permitted to relieve the hours of separation by occasional intercourse with the objects of their earliest affections."—See the notes to Mrs. Brunton's Works.

My home ! the spirit of its love is breathing
In every wind that plays across my track ;
From its white walls the very tendrils wreathing,
Seem with soft links to draw the wanderer back.

There am I loved—there prayed for—there my mother
Sits by the hearth with meekly thoughtful eye ;
There my young sisters watch to greet their brother ;
Soon their glad footsteps down the path will fly.

There, in sweet strains of kindred music blending,
All the home-voices meet at day's decline ;
One are those tones, as from one heart ascending,—
There laughs *my* home—sad stranger ! where is thine ?

Askest thou of mine ?—In solemn peace 'tis lying,
Far o'er the deserts and the tombs away ;
'Tis where *I*, too, am loved with love undying,
And fond hearts wait my step—But where are they ?

Ask where the earth's departed have their dwelling,
Ask of the clouds, the stars, the trackless air !
I know it not, yet trust the whisper, telling
My lonely heart that love unchanged is there.

And what is home, and where, but with the loving ?
Happy *thou* art that so canst gaze on thine !
My spirit feels but, in its weary roving,
That with the dead, where'er they be, is mine.

Go to thy home, rejoicing son and brother !
Bear in fresh gladness to the household scene !
For me, too, watch the sister and the mother,
I well believe—but dark seas roll between.

THE SOLDIER'S DEATH-BED.

"Wie herrlich die Sonne dort untergeht ! da ich noch ein Bube war—war's mein Lieblings ordanke, wie sie zu leben, wie sie zu sterben ! "

DIE XAUBER.

Like thee to die, thou sun !—My boyhood's dream
Was this ; and now my spirit, with thy beam,
Ebbs from a field of victory !—yet the hour
Bears back upon me, with a torrent's power,
Nature's deep longings :—Oh ! for some kind eye,
Wherein to meet love's fervent farewell gaze ;
Some breast to pillow life's last agony,
Some voice, to speak of hope and brighter days,

Beyond the pass of shadows! But I go,
I that have been so loved, go hence alone;
And ye, now gathering round my own hearth's glow,
Sweet friends! it may be that a softer tone,
Even in this moment, with your laughing glee,
Mingles its cadence while you speak of me:
Of me, your soldier, 'midst the mountains lying,
On the red banner of his battles dying,
Far, far away!—and oh! your parting prayer—
Will not his name be fondly murmured there?
It will! A blessing on that holy hearth!
Though clouds are darkening to o'ercast its mirth,
Mother! I may not hear thy voice again;
Sisters! ye watch to greet my step in vain;
Young brother, fare thee well!—on each dear head
Blessing and love a thousandfold be shed,
My soul's last earthly breathings! May your home
Smile for you ever! May no winter come,
No *world*, between your hearts! May even your tears,
For my sake, full of long-remembered years,
Quicken the true affections that entwine
Your lives in one bright bond! I may not sleep
Amidst our fathers, where those tears might shine
Over my slumbers; yet your love will keep
My memory living in the ancestral halls,
Where shame hath never trod:—the dark night falls,
And I depart. The brave are gone to rest,
The brothers of my combats, on the breast
Of the red field they reaped:—their work is done—
Thou, too, art set!—farewell, farewell, thou sun!
The last lone watcher of the bloody sod,
Offers a trusting spirit up to God.

THE IMAGE IN THE HEART.

TO ——.

"True, indeed, it is,
That they whom death has hidden from our sight,
Are worthiest of the mind's regard; with them
The future cannot contradict the past—
Mortality's last exercise and proof
Is undergone."

WORDSWORTH.

"The love where death has set his seal,
Nor age can chill, nor rival steal,
Nor falsehood disavow."

BYRON.

I CALL thee blessed!—though now the voice be fled
Which to thy soul brought dayspring with its tone,
And o'er the gentle eyes though dust be spread,
Eyes that ne'er looked on thine but light was thrown
Far through thy breast:

And though the music of thy life be broken,
Or changed in every chord, since he is gone,
Feeling all this, even yet, by many a token,
O thou, the deeply, but the brightly lone!
I call thee blessed!

For in thy heart there is a holy spot,
As 'mid the waste an Isle of fount and palm,
Forever green!—the world's breath enters not,
The passion-tempests may not break its calm;
'Tis thine, all thine!

Thither, in trust unbaffled, mayest thou turn
From bitter words, cold greetings, heartless eyes,
Quenching thy soul's thirst at the hidden urn
That, filled with waters of sweet memory, lies
In its own shrine.

Thou hast thy *home!*—there is no power in change
To reach that temple of the past; no sway,
In all time brings of sudden, dark, or strange,
To sweep the still transparent peace away
From its hushed air!

And oh! that glorious image of the dead!
Sole thing whereon a deathless love may rest,
And in deep faith and dreamy worship shed
Its high gifts fearlessly!—I call thee blessed.
If only *there.*

Blessed for the beautiful within thee dwelling
Never to fade!—a refuge from distrust,
A spring of purer life, still freshly welling,
To clothe the barrenness of earthly dust
With flowers divine.

And thou hast been beloved!—it is no dream,
No false mirage for *thee,* the fervent love.
The rainbow still unreached, the ideal gleam,
That ever seems before, beyond, above,
Far off to shine.

But thou, from all the daughters of the earth
Singled and marked, hast *known* its home and place;
And the high memory of its holy worth,
To this our life a glory and a grace
For thee hath given.

And art thou not *still* fondly, truly loved?
Thou art!—the love his spirit bore away
Was not for death!—a treasure but removed,
A bright bird parted for a clearer day,—
Thine still in heaven!

THE LAND OF DREAMS.

"And dreams, in their development, have breath,
And tears and tortures, and the touch of joy;
They leave a weight upon our waking thoughts,
They make us what we were not—what they will,
And shake us with the vision that's gone by."

BYRON.

O SPIRIT-LAND! thou land of dreams!
A world thou art of mysterious gleams,
Of startling voices, and sounds at strife,
A world of the dead in the hues of life.

Like a wizard's magic glass thou art,
When the weary shadows float by, and part:
Visions of aspects, now loved, now strange,
Glimmering and glimmering in ceaseless change.

Thou art like a city of the past,
With its gorgeous halls into fragments cast,
Amidst whose ruins there glide and play
Familiar forms of the world's to-day.

Thou art like the depths where the seas have birth,
Rich with the wealth that is lost from earth,—
All the sere flowers of our days gone by,
And the buried gems in thy bosom lie.

Yes! thou art like those dim sea-caves,
A realm of treasures, a realm of graves!
And the shapes through thy mysteries that come and go
Are of beauty and terror, of power and woe.

But for *me*, O thou picture-land of sleep!
Thou art all one world of affections deep,—
And wrung from my heart is each flushing dye,
That sweeps o'er thy chambers of imagery.

And thy bowers are fair—even as Eden fair:
All the beloved of my soul are there!
The forms my spirit most pines to see,
The eyes whose love hath been life to me—

They are there; and each blessed voice I hear,
Kindly, and joyous, and silvery clear:
But under-tones are in each, that say—
"It is but a dream; it will melt away!"

I walk with sweet friends in the sunset's glow;
I listen to music of long ago;
But one thought, like an omen, breathes faint through the day,
"It is but a dream; it will melt away!"

I sit by the hearth of my early days ;
All the home-faces are met by the blaze,—
And the eyes of the mother shine soft, yet say,
"It is but a dream ; it will melt away !"

And away, like a flower's passing breath, 'tis gone,
And I wake more sadly, more deeply lone !
Oh ! a haunted heart is a weight to bear,—
Bright faces, kind voices ! where are ye, where?

Shadow not forth, O thou land of dreams,
The past, as it fled by my own blue streams !
Make not my spirit within me burn
For the scenes and the hours that may ne'er return !

Call out from the *future* my visions bright,
From the world o'er the grave take thy solemn light,
And oh ! with the loved, whom no more I see,
Show me my home, as it yet may be !

As it yet may be in some purer sphere,
No cloud, no parting, no sleepless fear ;
So my soul may bear on through the long, long day,
Till I go where the beautiful melts not away !

WOMAN ON THE FIELD OF BATTLE.

"Where hath not woman stood,
Strong in affection's might ? a reed, upborne
By an o'ermastering current !"

GENTLE and lovely form,
What didst thou here,
When the fierce battle-storm
Bore down the spear ?

Banner and shivered crest
Beside thee strown,
Tell, that amidst the best,
Thy work was done !

Yet strangely, sadly fair,
O'er the wild scene,
Gleams, through its golden hair.
That brow serene.

Low lies the stately head—
Earth-bound the free.
How gave those haughty dead
A place to thee ?

Slumberer ! *thine* early bier
Friends should have crowned,
Many a flower and tear
Shedding around.

Soft voices, clear and young,
Mingling their swell,
Should o'er thy dust have sung
Earth's last farewell.

Sisters, above the grave
Of thy repose,
Should have bid violets wave
With the white rose.

Now must the trumpet's note,
Savage and shrill,
For requiem o'er thee float,
Thou fair and still !

And the swift charger sweep
In full career.
Trampling thy place of sleep,—
Why camest thou here?

Why?—ask the true heart why
Woman hath been
Ever, where brave men die,
Unshrinking seen?

Unto this harvest ground
Proud reapers came,—
Some, for that stirring sound,
A warrior's name;

Some for the stormy play
And joy of strife;
And some, to fling away
A weary life;—

But thou, pale sleeper, thou,
With the slight frame,
And the rich locks, whose glow
Death cannot tame;

Only one thought, one power,
Thee could have led,
So, through the tempest's hour,
To lift thy head!

Only the true, the strong,
The love, whose trust
Woman's deep soul too long
Pours on the dust!

THE DESERTED HOUSE.

Gloom is upon thy lonely hearth,
Oh, silent house! once filled with mirth;
Sorrow is in the breezy sound
Of thy tall poplars whispering round.

The shadow of departed hours
Hangs dim upon thine early flowers;
Even in thy sunshine seems to brood
Something more deep than solitude.

Fair art thou, fair to a stranger's gaze,
Mine own sweet home of other days!
My children's birthplace! yet for me
It is too much to look on thee.

Too much! for all about thee spread
I feel the memory of the dead,
And almost linger for the feet
That never more my step shall meet.

The looks, the smiles, all vanished now,
Follow me where thy roses blow,
The echoes of kind household words
Are with me 'midst thy singing-birds.

Till my heart dies, it dies away
In yearnings for what might not stay;
For love which ne'er deceived my trust,
For all which went with "dust to dust!"

What now is left me but to raise
From thee, lorn spot! my spirit's gaze—
To lift, through tears, my straining eye
Up to my Father's house on high?

Oh! many are the mansions there,[1]
But not in one hath grief a share!
No haunting shade from things gone by
May there o'ersweep the unchanging sky.

And *they* are there, whose long-loved mien
In earthly home no more is seen;
Whose places, where they smiling sate,
Are left unto us desolate.

We miss them when the board is spread;
We miss them when the prayer is said;
Upon our dreams their dying eyes
In still and mournful fondness rise.

But they are where these longings vain
Trouble no more the heart and brain;
The sadness of this aching love
Dims not our Father's house above.

[1] "In my Father's house there are many mansions."—John xiv.

Ye are at rest, and I in tears,[1]
Ye dwellers of immortal spheres!
Under the poplar boughs I stand,
And mourn the broken household band.

But, by your life of lowly faith,
And by your joyful hope in death,
Guide me, till on some brighter shore
The severed wreath is bound once more!

Holy ye were, and good, and true!
No change can cloud my thoughts of you;
Guide me, like you to live and die,
And reach my Father's house on high!

THE STRANGER'S HEART.

The stranger's heart! oh, wound it not!
A yearning anguish is its lot;
In the green shadow of thy tree
The stranger finds no rest with thee.

Thou think'st the vine's low rustling leaves
Glad music round thy household eaves;
To him that sound hath sorrow's tone—
The stranger's heart is with his own.

Thou think'st thy children's laughing play
A lovely sight at fall of day;—
Then are the stranger's thoughts oppressed—
His mother's voice comes o'er his breast.

Thou think'st it sweet when friend with friend
Beneath one roof in prayer may blend;
Then doth the stranger's eye grow dim—
Far, far are those who prayed with him.

Thy hearth, thy home, thy vintage-land—
The voices of thy kindred band—
Oh! 'midst them all when blest thou art,
Deal gently with the stranger's heart!

TO A REMEMBERED PICTURE.[2]

They haunt me still—those calm, pure, holy eyes!
Their piercing sweetness wanders through my dreams:
The soul of music that within them lies,
Comes o'er *my* soul in soft and sudden gleams:
Life—spirit life, immortal and divine,
Is there—and yet how dark a death was thine!

Could it—oh! *could* it be—meek child of song?
The might of gentleness on that fair brow—
Was the celestial gift no shield from wrong?
Bore it no talisman to ward the blow?

[1] From an ancient Hebrew dirge:—
"Mourn for the mourner, and not for the dead,
For he is at rest, and we in tears!"

[2] That of Rizzio, at Holyrood House.

Ask if a flower, upon the billows cast,
Might brave their strife—a flute-note hush the blast?

Are there not deep sad oracles to read
In the clear stillness of that radiant face?
Yes, even like thee must gifted spirits bleed,
Thrown on a world, for heavenly things no place!
Bright exiled birds that visit alien skies,
Pouring on storms their suppliant melodies.

And seeking ever some true, gentle breast,
Whereon their trembling plumage might repose,
And their free song notes, from that happy nest,
Gush as a fount that forth from sunlight flows;
Vain dream! the love whose precious balms might save,
Still, still denied—they struggle to the grave.

Yet my heart shall not sink!—another doom,
Victim! hath set its promise in thine eye;
A light is there, too quenchless for the tomb,
Bright earnest of a nobler destiny;
Telling of answers, in some far-off sphere,
To the deep souls that find no echo here.

COME HOME!

COME home! there is a sorrowing breath
In music since ye went,
And the early flower-scents wander by,
With mournful memories blent.
The tones in every household voice
Are grown more sad and deep,
And the sweet word—*brother*—wakes a wish
To turn aside and weep.

O ye beloved! come home!—the hour
Of many a greeting tone,
The time of hearth-light and of song
Returns—and ye are gone!
And darkly, heavily it falls
On the forsaken room,
Burdening the heart with tenderness,
That deepens 'midst the gloom.

Where finds it *you*, ye wandering ones?
With all your boyhood's glee
Untamed, beneath the desert's palm,
Or on the lone mid-sea?
By stormy hills of battles old?
Or where dark rivers foam?—
Oh! life is dim where ye are not—
Back, ye beloved, come home!

Come with the leaves and winds of spring,
And swift birds, o'er the main!
Our love is grown too sorrowful—
Bring us its youth again!
Bring the glad tones to music back!
Still, still your home is fair,
The spirit of your sunny life
Alone is wanting there!

THE FOUNTAIN OF OBLIVION.

"*Implora pace!*"[1]

One draught, kind fairy! from that fountain deep,
To lay the phantoms of a haunted breast,
And lone affections, which are grief, to steep
In the cool honey-dews of dreamless rest;
And from the soul the lightning-marks, to lave—
One draught of that sweet wave!

Yet, mortal, pause!—within thy mind is laid
Wealth, gathered long and slowly; thoughts divine
Heap that full treasure-house; and thou hast made
The gems of many a spirit's ocean thine;
Shall the dark waters of oblivion bear
A pyramid so fair?

Pour from the fount! and let the draught efface
All the vain lore by memory's pride amassed,
So it but swept along the torrent's trace,
And fill the hollow channels of the past;
And from the bosom's inmost folded leaf
Raise the one master-grief!

Yet pause once more! All, *all* thy soul hath known,
Loved, felt, rejoiced in, from its grasp must fade!
Is there no voice whose kind awakening tone
A sense of spring-time in thy heart hath made?
No eye whose glance thy day-dreams would recall?
Think—wouldst thou part with all?

Fill with forgetfulness!—there are, there *are*
Voices whose music I have loved too well;
Eyes of deep gentleness—but they are far—
Never! oh never, in my home to dwell!
Take their soft looks from off my yearning soul—
Fill high the oblivious bowl!

Yet pause again! With memory wilt thou cast
The undying hope away, of memory born?
Hope of reunion, heart to heart at last,
No restless doubt between, no rankling thorn?
Wouldst thou erase all records of delight
That make such visions bright?

Fill with forgetfulness, fill high!——Yet stay—
'Tis from the past we shadow forth the land
Where smiles, long lost, again shall light our way,
And the soul's friends be wreathed in one bright band.
Pour the sweet waters back on their own rill—
I *must* remember still.

[1] Quoted from a letter of Lord Byron's. He describes the impression produced upon him by some tombs at Bologna, bearing this simple inscription, and adds, "When I die, I could wish that some friend would see these words, and no other, placed above my grave,—'*Implora pace.*'"

For their sake, for the dead—whose image naught,
May dim within the temple of my breast—
For their love's sake, which now no earthly thought
May shake or tremble with its own unrest,
Though the past haunt me as a spirit—yet
I ask not to forget.

WELSH MELODIES.

THE HARP OF WALES.

INTRODUCTORY STANZAS, INSCRIBED TO THE RUTHIN WELSH LITERARY SOCIETY.

Harp of the mountain-land ! sound forth again
As when the foaming Hirlas horn was crowned,
And warrior hearts beat proudly to the strain,
And the bright mead at Owain's feast went round :
Wake with the spirit and the power of yore !
Harp of the ancient hills ! be heard once more !

Thy tones are not to cease ! The Roman came
O'er the blue waters with his thousand oars
Through Mona's oaks he sent the wasting flame ;
The Druid shrines lay prostrate on our shores :
All gave their ashes to the wind and sea—
Ring out, thou harp ! he could not silence thee.

Thy tones are not to cease ! The Saxon passed,
His banners floated on Eryri's gales ;
But thou wert heard above the trumpet's blast,
E'en when his towers rose loftiest o'er the vales !
Thine was the voice that cheered the brave and free ;
They had their hills, their chainless hearts, and thee.

Those were dark years !—They saw the valiant fall,
The rank weeds gathering round the chieftain's board,
The hearth left lonely in the ruined hall—
Yet power was *thine*—a gift in every chord !
Call back that spirit to the days of peace,
Thou noble harp ! thy tones are not to cease !

DRUID CHORUS ON THE LANDING OF THE ROMANS.

By the dread and viewless powers
Whom the storms and seas obey,
From the Dark Isle's[1] mystic bowers,
Romans! o'er the deep away!
Think ye, 'tis but nature's gloom
O'er our shadowy coast which broods?
By the altar and the tomb,
Shun these haunted solitudes!

Know ye Mona's awful spells?
She the rolling orbs can stay!
She the mighty grave compels
Back to yield its fettered prey!
Fear ye not the lightning-stroke?
Mark ye not the fiery sky?
Hence!—around our central oak
Gods are gathering—Romans, fly!

THE GREEN ISLES OF OCEAN.[2]

Where are they, those green fairy islands, reposing
In sunlight and beauty on ocean's calm breast?
What spirit the things which are hidden disclosing,
Shall point the bright way to their dwellings of rest?
Oh! lovely they rose on the dreams of past ages,
The mighty have sought them, undaunted in faith;
But the land hath been sad for her warriors and sages,
For the guide to those realms of the blessed is death.

Where are they, the high-minded children of glory,
Who steered for those distant green spots on the wave?
To the winds of the ocean they left their wild story,
In the fields of their country they found not a grave.
Perchance they repose where the summer-breeze gathers
From the flowers of each vale immortality's breath;
But their steps shall be ne'er on the hills of their fathers—
For the guide to those realms of the blessed is death.

[1] *Ynys Dywyll*, or the Dark Island—an ancient name for Anglesey.

[2] The "Green Islands of Ocean," or "Green Spots of the Floods," called in the *Triads* Gwerddonan Llion," (respecting which some remarkable superstitions have been preserved in Wales,) were supposed to be the abode of the Fair Family, or souls of the virtuous Druids, who could not enter the Christian heaven, but were permitted to enjoy this paradise of their own. Gafran, a distinguished British chieftain of the fifth century, went on a voyage with his family to discover these islands; but they were never heard of afterwards. This event, the voyage of Merddin Emrys with his twelve bards, and the expedition of Madoc, were called the three losses by disappearance of the island of Britain.—*Vide* W. O. Pughes' *Cambrian Biography* also *Cambro-Briton*, vol. i. p. 124.

THE SEA-SONG OF GAFRAN.[1]

Watch ye well ! The moon is shrouded
On her bright throne ;
Storms are gathering, stars are clouded,
Waves make wild moan.
'Tis no night of hearth-fires glowing,
And gay songs and wine-cups flowing ;
But of winds, in darkness blowing,
O'er seas unknown !

In the dwellings of our fathers,
Round the glad blaze,
Now the festive circle gathers
With harps and lays ;
Now the rush-strewn halls are ringing,
Steps are bounding, bards are singing,
—Ay ! the hour to hall is bringing
Peace, joy, or praise.

Save to us, our night-watch keeping,
Storm-winds to brave,
While the very sea-bird sleeping
Rests in its cave !
Think of us when hearts are beaming,
Think of us when mead is streaming,
Ye, of whom our souls are dreaming
On the dark wave !

THE HIRLAS HORN.

Fill high the blue hirlas,[2] that shines like the wave,[3]
When sunbeams are bright on the spray of the sea ;
And bear thou the rich foaming mead to the brave,
The dragons of battle, the sons of the free !
To those from whose spears, in the shock of the fight,
A beam, like heaven's lightning,[4] flashed over the field ;
To those who came rushing a storms in their might,
Who have shivered the helmet, and cloven the shield ;
The sound of whose strife was like oceans afar,
When lances were red from the harvest of war.

[1] See note to the "Green Isles of Ocean."
[2] Hirlas, from *hir*, long, and *glas*, blue or azure.
[3] Fetch the horn, that we may drink together, whose gloss is like the waves of the sea ; whose green handles show the skill of the artist, and are tipped with gold."—From the *Hirlas Horn* of Owain Cyfeilioc.
[4] "Heard ye in Maelor the noise of war, the horrid din of arms, their furious onset, loud as in the battle of Bangor, where fire flashed out of their spears ?"—*Ibid.*

Fill high the blue hirlas ! O cup-bearer, fill
For the lords of the field in their festival's hour,
And let the mead foam, like the stream of the hill
That bursts o'er the rock in the pride of its power :
Praise, praise to the mighty, fill high the smooth horn
Of honor and mirth,[1] for the conflict is o'er ;
And round let the golden-tipped hirlas be borne
To the lion-defenders of Gwynedd's fair shore.
Who rushed to the field where the glory was one,
As eagles that soar from their cliffs to the sun.

Fill higher the hirlas ! forgetting not those
Who share its bright draught in the days that are fled !
Though cold on their mountains the valiant repose,
Their lot shall be lovely—renown to the dead !
While harps in the hall of the feast shall be strung,
While regal Eryri with snow shall be crowned—
So long by the bards shall their battles be sung,
And the heart of the hero shall burn at the sound.
The free winds of Maelor[2] shall swell with their name,
And Owain's rich hirlas be filled to their fame.

THE HALL OF CYNDDYLAN.

The Hall of Cynddylan is gloomy to-night ;[3]
I weep, for the grave has extinguished its light ;
The beam of the lamp from its summit is o'er,
The blaze of its hearth shall give welcome no more !

The Hall of Cynddylan is voiceless and still,
The sound of its harpings hath died on the hill !
Be silent forever, thou desolate scene,
Nor let e'en an echo recall what hath been.

[1] "Fill then, the yellow-lipped horn -badge of honor and mirth."—From the *Hirlas Horn* of Owain Cyfeiliog.

[2] Maelor, part of the counties of Denbigh and Flint, according to the modern division

[3] "The Hall of Cynddylan is gloomy this night,
Without fire, without bed—
I must weep awhile, and then be silent.

The Hall of Cynddylan is gloomy this night,—
Without fire, without being lighted—
Be thou encircled with spreading silent !

* * * * * * *

The Hall of Cynddylan is without love this night,
Since he that owned it is no more—
Ah Death ! it will be but a short time he will leave me.

The Hall of Cynddylan it is not easy this night,
On the top of the rock of Hydwith,
Without its lord, without company, without the circling feasts !"

See Owen's *Heroic Elegies of Llywarch Her.*

The Hall of Cynddylan is lonely and bare,
No banquet, no guest, not a footstep is there !
Oh ! where are the warriors who circled its board ?
—The grass will soon wave where the mead-cup was
poured !

The Hall of Cynddylan is loveless to-night,
Since he is departed whose smile made it bright !
I mourn ; but the sigh of my soul shall be brief,
The pathway is short to the grave of my chief !

THE LAMENT OF LLYWARCH HEN.

[Llywarch Hen, or Llywarch the Aged, a celebrated bard and chief of the time of Arthur, was prince of Argoed, supposed to be a part of the present Cumberland. Having sustained the loss of his patrimony, and witnessed the fall of most of his sons, in the unequal contest maintained by the North Britons against the growing power of the Saxons, Llywarch was compelled to fly from his country, and seek refuge in Wales. He there found an asylum for some time in the residence of Cynddylan, Prince of Powys, whose fall he pathetically laments in one of his poems. These are still extant ; and his elegy on old age and the loss of his sons, is remarkable for its simplicity and beauty.—See *Cambrian Biography* and OWEN'S *Heroic Elegies and other poems of Llywarch Hen.*]

THE bright hours return, and the blue sky is ringing
With song, and the hills are all mantled with bloom ;
But fairer than aught which the summer is bringing,
The beauty and youth gone to people the tomb !
Oh ! why should I live to hear music resounding,
Which cannot awake ye, my lovely, my brave ?
Why smile the waste flowers, my sad footsteps surrounding ?
—My sons ! they but clothe the green turf of your grave !

Alone on the rocks of the stranger I linger,
My spirit all wrapt in the past as a dream !
Mine ear hath no joy in the voice of the singer,[1]
Mine eye sparkles not to the sunlight's glad beam ;
Yet, yet I live on, though forsaken and weeping !
—O grave ! why refuse to the agèd thy bed,
When valor's high heart on thy bosom is sleeping,
When youth's glorious flower is gone down to the dead !

Fair were ye, my sons ! and all kingly your bearing,
As on to the fields of your glory ye trode !
Each prince of my race the bright golden chain wearing,
Each eye glancing fire, shrouded now by the sod ![2]

[1] "What I loved when I was a youth is hateful to me now."

[2] "Four and twenty sons to me have been
Wearing the golden chain, and leading princes."
Elegies of Llywarch Hen.

The golden chain, as a badge of honor, worn by heroes, is frequently alluded to in the works of the ancient British bards.

I weep when the blast of the trumpet is sounding,
Which rouses ye not, O my lovely ! my brave !
When warriors and chiefs to their proud steeds are bounding,
I turn from heaven's light, for it smiles on your grave ![1]

GRUFYDD'S FEAST.

["Grufydd ab Rhys ab Tewdwr, having resisted the English successfully in the time of Stephen, and at last obtained from them an honorable peace, made a great feast at his palace in *Ystrad Tywi* to celebrate this event. To this feast, which was continued for forty days, he invited all who would come in peace from *Gwynedd. Powys* the *Deheubarth*, Glamorgan, and the marches. Against the appointed time he prepared all kinds of delicious viands and liquors; with every entertainment of vocal and instrumental song; thus patronizing the poets and musicians. He encouraged, too, all sorts of representations and manly games, and afterwards sent away all those who had excelled in them with honorable gifts."—*Cambrian Biography*.]

LET the yellow mead shine for the sons of the brave,
By the bright festal torches around us that wave !
Set open the gates of the prince's wide hall,
And hang up the chief's ruddy spear on the wall !
There is peace in the land we have battled to save :
Then spread ye the feast, bid the wine-cup foam high,[2]
That those may rejoice who have feared not to die !

Let the horn whose loud blast gave the signal for fight,
With the bee's sunny nectar now sparkle in light ;[3]
Let the rich draught it offers with gladness be crowned,
For the strong hearts in combat that leaped at its sound !
Like the billows' dark swell was the path of their might,
Red, red as their blood, fill the wine-cup on high,
That those may rejoice who have feared not to die !

And wake ye the children of song from their dreams,
On Maelor's wild hills and by Dyfed's fair streams ![4]
Bid them haste with those strains of the lofty and free,
Which shall float down the waves of long ages to be.
Sheath the sword which hath given them unperishing themes,
And pour the bright mead : let the wine-cup foam high,
That those may rejoice who have feared not to die !

[1] "Hardly has the snow covered the vale,
When the warriors are hastening to the battle ;
I do not go, I am hindered by infirmity."
Elegies of Llywarch Hen.

[2] Wine, as well as mead, is frequently mentioned in the poems of the ancient British bards.

[3] The horn was used for two purposes—to sound the alarm in war, and to drink the mead at feasts.

[4] Maelor, part of the counties of Denbigh and Flint. Dyfed (said to signify a land abounding with streams of water), the modern Pembrokeshire.

THE CAMBRIAN IN AMERICA.

When the last flush of eve is dying
On boundless lakes afar that shine :
When winds amidst the palms are sighing,
And fragrance breathes from every pine :[1]
When stars through cypress boughs are gleaming,
And fire-flies wander bright and free,
Still of thy harps, thy mountains dreaming,
My thoughts, wild Cambria ! dwell with thee !
Alone o'er green savannas roving,
Where some broad stream in silence flows,
Or through the eternal forests moving,
One only home my spirit knows !
Sweet land, whence memory ne'er hath parted !
To thee on sleep's light wing I fly ;
But happier could the weary-hearted
Look on his own blue hills and die !

THE FAIR ISLE.[2]

FOR THE MELODY CALLED THE "WELSH GROUND."

[The Bard of the Palace, under the ancient Welsh Princes, always accompanied the army when it marched into an enemy's country ; and, while it was preparing for battle, or dividing the spoils, he performed an ancient song, called *Unbennaeth Prydain*, the Monarchy of Britain. It has been conjectured that this poem referred to the tradition of the Welsh, that the whole island had once been possessed by their ancestors, who were driven into a corner of it by their Saxon invaders. When the prince had received his share of the spoils, the bard, for the performance of this song, was rewarded with the most valuable beast that remained.—See JONES'S *Historical Account of the Welsh Bards.*]

Sons of the Fair Isle ! forget not the time
Ere spoilers had breathed the free air of your clime :
All that its eagles behold in their flight
Was yours, from the deep of each storm-mantled height,
Though from your race that proud birthright be torn,
Unquenched is the spirit for monarchy born.

CHORUS.

Darkly though clouds may hang o'er us awhile,
The crown shall not pass from the Beautiful Isle.

Ages may roll ere your children regain
The land for which heroes have perished in vain ;
Yet, in the sound of your names shall be power,
Around her still gathering in glory's full hour.
Strong in the fame of the mighty that sleep,
Your Britain shall sit on the throne of the deep.

CHORUS.

Then shall their spirits rejoice in her smile,
Who died for the crown of the Beautiful Isle.

[1] The aromatic odor of the pine has frequently been mentioned by travellers.
[2] Ynys Prydain was the ancient Welsh name of Britain, and signifies *fair* or *beautiful isle.*

TALIESIN'S PROPHECY.

[A prophecy of Taliesin relating to the Ancient Britons is still extant, and has been strikingly verified. It is to the following effect :—

"Their God they shall worship,
Their language they shall retain,
Their land they shall lose,
Except wild Wales."]

A voice from time departed yet floats thy hills among,
O Cambria ! thus thy prophet bard, thy Taliesin sung :
"The path of unborn ages is traced upon my soul,
The clouds which mantle things unseen away before me roll,
A light the depths revealing hath o'er my spirit passed,
A rushing sound from days to be swells fitful in the blast,
And tells me that forever shall live the lofty tongue
To which the harp of Mona's woods by freedom's hand was strung.

"Green island of the mighty ![1] I see thine ancient race
Driven from their father's realm to make the rocks their dwelling-place !
I see from Uthyr's[2] kingdom the sceptre pass away,
And many a line of bards and chiefs and princely men decay.
But long as Arvon's mountains shall lift their sovereign forms,
And wear the crown to which is given dominion o'er the storms,
So long, their empire sharing, shall live the lofty tongue
To which the harp of Mona's woods by freedom's hand was strung !"

OWEN GLYNDWR'S WAR-SONG.

Saw ye the blazing star ?[3]
The heavens looked down on freedom's war,
And lit her torch on high !
Bright on the dragon crest[4]
It tells that glory's wing shall rest,
When warriors meet to die !

Let earth's pale tyrants read despair
And vengeance in its flame ;
Hail ye, my bards ! the omen fair
Of conquest and of fame,
And swell the rushing mountain air
With songs of Glyndwr's name.

[1] *Ynys y Cedeirn*, or Isle of the Mighty—an ancient name given to Britain.
[2] Uthyr Pendragon, king of Britain, supposed to have been the father of Arthur.
[3] The year 1402 was ushered in with a comet or blazing star, which the bards interpreted as an omen favorable to the cause of Glyndwr. It served to infuse spirit into the minds of a superstitious people, the first success of their chieftain confirmed this belief, and gave new vigor to their actions.—Pennant.
[4] Owen Glyndwr styled himself the *Dragon* ; a name he assumed in imitation of Uthyr, whose victories over the Saxons were foretold by the appearances of a star with a dragon beneath, which Uthyr used as his badge ; and on that account became a favorite among the Welsh.—Pennant.

At the dead hour of night,
Mark ye how each majestic height
Burned in its awful beams?
Red shone the eternal snows,
And all the land, as bright it rose,
Was full of glorious dreams!

O eagles of the battle,[1] rise!
The hope of Gwynedd wakes![2]
It is your banner in the skies
Through each dark cloud which breaks,
And mantles with triumphal dyes
Your thousand hills and lakes!

A sound is on the breeze,
A murmur as of swelling seas!
The Saxon on his way!
Lo! spear and shield and lance,
From Deva's waves with lightning glance,
Reflected to the day!

But who the torrent-wave compels
A conqueror's chain to bear?
Let those who wake the soul that dwells
On our free winds beware!
The greenest and the loveliest dells
May be the lion's lair!

Of us *they* told, the seers,
And monarch bards of elder years,
Who walked on earth as powers!
And in their burning strains,
A spell of might and mystery reigns,
To guard our mountain towers!

—In Snowdon's caves a prophet lay:[3]
Before his gifted sight,
The march of ages pasesd away
With hero-footsteps bright,
But proudest in that long array
Was Glyndwr's path of light!

PRINCE MADOC'S FAREWELL.

Why lingers my gaze where the last hues of day
On the hills of my country in loveliness sleep?
Too fair is the sight for a wanderer, whose way
Lies far o'er the measureless worlds of the deep!
Fall, shadows of twilight! and veil the green shore,
That the heart of the mighty may waver no more!

Why rise on my thoughts, ye free songs of the land
Where the harp's lofty soul on each wild wind is borne?
Be hushed, be forgotten! for ne'er shall the hand
Of minstrel with melody greet my return.
—No! no!—let your echoes still float on the breeze,
And my heart shall be strong for the conquest of seas!

'Tis not for the land of my sires to give birth
Unto bosoms that shrink when their trial is nigh;
Away! we will bear over ocean and earth
A name and a spirit that never shall die.
My course to the winds, to the stars, I resign;
But my soul's quenchless fire, O my country! is thine.

[1] "Bring the horn to Tudwrou, *the Eagle of Battles*."—See *The Hirlas Horn* of Owain Cyfeiliog. The eagle is a very favorite image with the ancient Welsh poets.

[2] Gwynedd (pronounced Gwyneth), North Wales.

[3] Merlin, Merddin Emrys, is said to have composed his prophecies on the future lot of the Britons amongst the mountains of Snowdon. Many of these, and other ancient prophecies, were applied by Glyndwr to his own cause, and assisted him greatly in animating the spirit of his followers.

CASWALLON'S TRIUMPH.

[Caswallon (or Cassivelaunus) was elected to the supreme command of the Britons (as recorded in the *Triads*), for the purpose of opposing Cæsar, under the title of Elected Chief of Battle. Whatever impression the disciplined legions of Rome might have made on the Britons in the first instance, the subsequent departure of Cæsar they considered as a cause of triumph, and it is stated that Caswallon proclaimed an assembly of the various states of the island, for the purpose of celebrating that event by feasting and public rejoicing.—See the *Cambrian Biography*.]

From the glowing southern regions,
Where the sun-god makes his dwelling,
Came the Roman's crested legions
O'er the deep, round Britain swelling.
The wave grew dazzling as he passed,
With light from spear and helmet cast;
And sounds in every rushing blast
Of a conqueror's march were telling,

But his eagle's royal pinion,
Bowing earth beneath its glory,
Could not shadow with dominion
Our wild seas and mountains hoary!
Back from their cloudy realm it flies,
To float in light through softer skies;
Oh! chainless winds of heaven arise!
Bear a vanquished world the story!

Lords of earth! to Rome returning,
Tell how Britain combat wages,
How Caswallon's soul is burning
When the storm of battle rages!
And ye that shrine high deeds in song,
O holy and immortal throng!
The brightness of his name prolong,
As a torch to stream through ages!

HOWEL'S SONG.

[Howel ab Einion Llygliw was a distinguished bard of the fourteenth century. A beautiful poem, addressed by him to Myfanwy Vychan, a celebrated beauty of those times, is still preserved amongst the remains of the Welsh bards. The ruins of Myfanwy's residence, Castle Dinas Brân, may yet be traced on a high hill near Llangollen.]

Press on, my steed! I hear the swell[1]
Of Valle Crucis' vesper-bell
Sweet floating from the holy dell
O'er woods and waters round.
Perchance the maid I love, e'en now,
From Dinas Brân's majestic brow,
Looks o'er the fairy world below,
And listens to the sound!

I feel her presence on the scene!
The summer air is more serene!
The deep woods wave in richer green,
The wave more gently flows!
O fair as Ocean's curling foam![2]
Lo! with the balmy hour I come—
The hour that brings the wanderer home,
The weary to repose!

[1] "I have rode hard, mounted on a fine high-bred steed, upon thy account, O thou with the countenance of cherry-flower bloom The speed was with eagerness, and the strong long-hammed steed of Alban reached the summit of the high land of Brân."

[2] "My loving heart sinks with grief without thy support, O thou that hast the whiteness of the curling waves! . . . I know that this pain will avail me nothing towards obtaining thy love, O thou whose countenance is bright as the flowers of the hawthorn!"—Howel's *Ode to Myfanwy*.

Haste ! on each mountain's darkening crest
The glow hath died, the shadows rest,
The twilight star on Deva's breast
Gleams tremulously bright ;

Speed for Myfanwy's bower on high !
Though scorn may wound me from her eye,
Oh ! better by the sun to die,
Than live in rayless night !

THE MOUNTAIN FIRES.

[" The custom retained in Wales of lighting fires (*Coelcerthi*) on November eve, is said to be a traditional memorial of the massacre of the British chiefs by Hengist, on Salisbury plain. The practice is, however, of older date, and had reference originally to the *Alban Elved*, or new-year."—*Cambro-Briton.*

When these fires are kindled on the mountains, and seen through the darkness of a stormy night, casting a red and fitful glare over heath and rock, their effect is strikingly picturesque.]

Light the hills ! till heaven is glowing
As with some red meteor's rays !
Winds of night, though rudely blowing,
Shall but fan the beacon-blaze.
Light the hills ! till flames are streaming
From Yr Wyddfa's sovereign steep,[1]
To the waves round Mona gleaming,
Where the Roman tracked the deep !

Be the mountain watch-fires heightened,
Pile them to the stormy sky !
Till each torrent wave is brightened,
Kindling as it rushes by.

Now each rock, the mist's high dwelling,
Towers in reddening light sublime ;
Heap the flames ! around them telling
Tales of Cambria's elder time.

Thus our sires, the fearless-hearted,
Many a solemn vigil kept,
When, in ages long departed,
O'er the noble dead they wept.
In the winds we hear their voices—
"Sons ! though yours a brighter lot,
When the mountain-land rejoices,
Be her mighty unforgot !"

[1] Yr Wyddfa, the Welsh name of Snowdon, said to mean the *conspicuous place*, or object.

ERYRI WEN.

["Snowdon was held as sacred by the ancient Britons, as Parnassus was by the Greeks, and Ida by the Cretans. It is still said, that whosoever slept upon Snowdon would wake inspired, as much as if he had taken a nap on the hill of Apollo. The Welsh had always the strongest attachment to the tract of Snowdon. Our princes had, in addition to their title, that of Lord of Snowdon."—PENNANT.

THEIRS was no dream, O monarch hill,
With heaven's own azure crowned!
Who called thee—what thou shalt be still,
White Snowdon!—holy ground.

They fabled not, thy sons who told
Of the dread power enshrined
Within thy cloudy mantle's fold,
And on thy rushing wind!

It shadowed o'er thy silent height,
It filled thy chainless air,
Deep thoughts of majesty and might
Forever breathing there.

Nor hath it fled! the awful spell
Yet holds unbroken sway,
As when on that wild rock it fell
Where Merddin Emrys lay![1]

Though from their stormy haunts of yore
Thine eagles long have flown,[2]
As proud a flight the soul shall soar
Yet from thy mountain-throne!

Pierce then the heavens, thou hill of streams!
And make the snows thy crest!
The sunlight of immortal dreams
Around thee still shall rest.

Eryri! temple of the bard!
And fortress of the free!
Midst rocks which heroes died to guard,
Their spirit dwells with thee!

CHANT OF THE BARDS BEFORE THEIR MASSACRE BY EDWARD I.[3]

RAISE ye the sword! let the death-stroke be given;
Oh! swift may it fall as the lightning of heaven!
So shall our spirits be free as our strains—
The children of song may not languish in chains!

[1] Dinas Emrys (the fortress of Ambrose), a celebrated rock amongst the mountains of Snowdon, is said to be so called from having been the residence of Merddyn Emrys, called by the Latins Merlinus Ambrosius, the celebrated prophet and magician: and there, tradition says, he wrote his prophecies concerning the future state of the Britons.

There is another curious tradition respecting a large stone, on the ascent of Snowdon, called *Maen du yr Arddu*, the black stone of Arddu. It is said, that if two persons were to sleep a night on this stone, in the morning one would find himself endowed with the gift of poetry, and the other would become insane.—See WILLIAMS'S *Observations on the Snowdon Mountains.*

[2] It is believed amongst the inhabitants of these mountains, that eagles have heretofore bred in the lofty clefts of their rocks. Some wandering ones are still seen at times, though very rarely, amongst the precipices.—See WILLIAMS'S *Observations on the Snowdon Mountains.*

[3] This sanguinary deed is not attested by any historian of credit. And it deserves to be also noticed, that none of the bardick productions since the time of Edward make any allusion to such an event.—See *The Cambro-Briton*, vol. i., p. 195.

Have ye not trampled our country's bright crest ?
Are heroes reposing in death on her breast ?
Red with their blood do her mountain-streams flow,
And think ye that still we would linger below ?

Rest, ye brave dead ! midst the hills of your sires,
Oh ! who would not slumber when freedom expires ?
Lonely and voiceless your halls must remain—
The children of song may not breathe in the chain !

THE DYING BARD'S PROPHECY.[1]

" All is not lost—the unconquerable will
And courage never to submit or yield.—MILTON.

THE hall of harps is lone to-night,
And cold the chieftain's hearth :
It hath no mead, it hath no light ;
No voice of melody, no sound of mirth.

The bow lies broken on the floor
Whence the free step is gone ;
The pilgrim turns him from the door
Where minstrel blood hath stained the threshold stone.

" And I, too, go : my wound is deep,
My brethren long have died ;
Yet, ere my soul grow dark with sleep,
Winds ! bear the spoiler one more tone of pride !

" Bear it where, on his battle-plain,
Beneath the setting sun,
He counts my country's noble slain—
Say to him—Saxon, think not *all* is won.

" Thou hast laid low the warrior's head,
The minstrel's chainless hand :
Dreamer ! that numberest with the dead
The burning spirit of the mountain-land !

" Thinkst thou, because the song hath seized,
The soul of song is flown ?
Thinkst thou it woke to crown the feast,
It lived beside the ruddy hearth alone ?

" No ! by our wrongs, and by our blood !
We leave it pure and free ;
Though hushed awhile, that sounding flood
Shall roll in joy through ages yet to be.

[1] At the time of the supposed massacre of the Welsh bards by Edward the First.

"We leave it midst our country's woe—
The birthright of her breast;
We leave it as we leave the snow
Bright and eternal on Eryri's [1] crest.

"We leave it with our fame to dwell
Upon our children's breath;
Our voice in theirs through time shall swell—
The bard hath gifts of prophecy from death."

He dies; but yet the mountains stand,
Yet sweeps the torrent's tide;
And this is yet *Aneurin's* [2] land—
Winds! bear the spoiler one more tone of pride!

THE ROCK OF CADER IDRIS.

[It is an old tradition of the Welsh bards, that on the summit of the mountain Cader Idris is an excavation resembling a couch; and that whoever should pass a night in that hollow, would be found in the morning either dead, in a frenzy, or endowed with the highest poetical inspiration.]

I LAY on that rock where the storms have their dwelling,
The birthplace of phantoms, the home of the cloud;
Around it forever deep music is swelling,
The voice of the mountain-wind, solemn and loud.
'Twas a midnight of shadows all fitfully streaming,
Of wild waves and breezes, that mingled their moan;
Of dim shrouded stars, as from gulfs faintly gleaming;
And I met the dread gloom of its grandeur alone.

I lay there in silence—a spirit came o'er me;
Man's tongue hath no language to speak what I saw;
Things glorious, unearthly, passed floating before me,
And my heart almost fainted with rapture and awe.
I viewed the dread beings around us that hover,
Though veiled by the mists of mortality's breath;
And I called upon darkness the vision to cover,
For a strife was within me of madness and death.

I saw them—the powers of the wind and the ocean,
The rush of whose pinion bears onward the storms;
Like the sweep of the white rolling wave was their motion—
I *felt* their dim presence, but knew not their forms!
I saw them—the mighty of ages departed—
The dead were around me that night on the hill:
From their eyes, as they passed, a cold radiance they darted,—
There was light on my soul, but my heart's blood was chill.

[1] Eryri, Welsh name for the Snowdon mountains.
[2] Aneurin, one of the noblest of the Welsh bards.

I saw what man looks on, and dies—but my spirit
Was strong, and triumphantly lived through that hour ;
And, as from the grave, I awoke to inherit
A flame all immortal, a voice, and a power !
Day burst on that rock with the purple cloud crested,
And high Cader Idris rejoiced in the sun ;—
But oh ! what new glory all nature invested,
When the sense which gives soul to her beauty was won !

SONGS OF THE CID.

These ballads are not translations from the Spanish, but are founded upon some of the "wild and wonderful" traditions preserved in the romances of that language, and the ancient poem of the Cid.

THE CID'S DEPARTURE INTO EXILE.

With sixty knights in his gallant train,
Went forth the Campeador of Spain ;
For wild sierras and plains afar,
He left the lands of his own Bivar.
To march o'er field, and to watch in tent,
From his home in good Castile he went ;
To the wasting siege and the battle's van,
—For the noble Cid was a banished man !

Through his olive-woods the morn-breeze played,
And his native streams wild music made,
And clear in the sunshine his vine-yards lay,
When for march and combat he took his way.

With a thoughtful spirit his way he took,
And he turned his steed for a part-ing look,
For a parting look at his own fair towers,
—Oh ! the exile's heart hath weary hours !

The pennons were spread, and the band arrayed,
But the Cid at the threshold a mo-ment stayed—
It *was* but a moment ; the halls were lone,
And the gates of his dwelling all open thrown.

There was not a steed in the empty stall,
Nor a spear nor a cloak on the naked wall,
Nor a hawk on the perch, nor a seat at the door,
Nor the sound of a step on the hol-low floor.

Then a dim tear swelled to the war-rior's eye,
As the voice of his native groves went by ;
And he said—"My foemen their wish have won :
Now the will of God be in all things done !"

But the trumpet blew, with its note of cheer,
And the winds of the morning swept off the tear,
And the fields of his glory lay dis-tant far,
—He is gone from the towers of his own Bivar !

THE CID'S DEATH-BED.

It was an hour of grief and fear
Within Valencia's walls,
When the blue spring-heaven lay still and clear
Above her marble halls.

There were pale cheeks and troubled eyes,
And steps of hurrying feet,
Where the Zambra's notes were wont to rise,
Along the sunny street.

It was an hour of fear and grief,
On bright Valencia's shore,
For Death was busy with her chief,
The noble Campeador.

The Moor-king's barks were on the deep,
With sounds and signs of war;
But the Cid was passing to his sleep,
In the silent Alcazar.

No moan was heard through the towers of state,
No weeper's aspect seen,
But by the couch Ximena sate,
With pale yet steadfast mien.

Stillness was round the leader's bed,
Warriors stood mournful nigh,
And banners, o'er his glorious head,
Were drooping heavily.

And feeble grew the conquering hand,
And cold the valiant breast;
He had fought the battles of the land,
And his hour was come to rest.

What said the Ruler of the field?
—His voice is faint and low;
The breeze that creeps o'er his lance and shield
Hath louder accents now.

"Raise ye no cry, and let no moan
Be made when I depart;
The Moor must hear no dirge's tone;
Be ye of mighty heart!

"Let the cymbal-clash and the trumpet-strain
From your walls ring far and shrill;
And fear ye not, for the saints of Spain
Shall grant you victory still.

"And gird my form with mail-array,
And set me on my steed;
So go ye forth on your funeral-way,
And God shall give you speed.

"Go with the dead in the front of war,
All armed with sword and helm,
And march by the camp of King Bucar,
For the good Castilian realm.

"And let me slumber in the soil
Which gave my fathers birth;
I have closed my day of battle-toil,
And my course is done on earth."

—Now wave, ye glorious banners! wave!
Through the lattice a wind sweeps by,
And the arms, o'er the death bed of the brave,
Send forth a hollow sigh.

Now wave, ye banners of many a fight!
As the fresh wind o'er you sweeps,
The wind and the banners fall hushed as night:
The Campeador—he sleeps!

Sound the battle-horn on the breeze of morn,
And swell out the trumpet's blast,
Till the notes prevail o'er the voice of wail,
For the noble Cid hath passed!

THE CID'S FUNERAL PROCESSION.

THE Moor had beleaguered Valencia's towers,
And lances gleamed up through her citron-bowers,
And the tents of the desert had girt her plain,
And camels were trampling the vines of Spain;
For the Cid was gone to rest.

There were men from wilds where the death-wind sweeps,
There were spears from hills where the lion sleeps,
There were bows from sands where the ostrich runs,
For the shrill horn of Afric had called her sons
To the battles of the west.

The midnight bell, o'er the dim seas heard,
Like the roar of waters, the air had stirred;
The stars were shining o'er tower and wave,
And the camp lay hushed as a wizard's cave;
But the Christians woke that night.

They reared the Cid on his barded steed,
Like a warrior mailed for the hour of need,
And they fixed the sword in the cold right hand,
Which had fought so well for his fathers' land,
And the shield from his neck hung bright.

There was arming heard in Valencia's halls,
There was vigil kept on the rampart walls;
Stars had not faded nor clouds turned red,
When the knight had girded the noble dead,
And the burial train moved out.

With a measured pace, as the pace of one,
Was the still death-march of the host begun;
With a silent step went the cuirassed bands,
Like a lion's tread on the burning sands;
And they gave no battle-shout.

When the first went forth, it was midnight deep,
In heaven was the moon, in the camp was sleep;
When the last through the city's gates had gone,
O'er tent and rampart the bright day shone,
With a sun-burst from the sea.

There were knights five hundred went armed before,
And Bermudez the Cid's green standard bore;
To its last fair field, with the break of morn,
Was the glorious banner in silence borne,
On the glad wind streaming free.

And the Campeador came stately then,
Like a leader circled with steel-clad men.
The helmet was down o'er the face of the dead,
But his steed went proud, by a warrior led,
For he knew that the Cid was there.

He was there, the Cid, with his own good sword,
And Ximena following her noble lord;
Her eye was solemn, her step was slow,
But there rose not a sound of war or woe,
Not a whisper on the air.

The halls in Valencia were still and lone,
The churches were empty, the masses done:

There was not a voice through the wide streets far,
Nor a foot-fall heard in the Alcazar,
—So the burial train moved out.

With a measured pace, as the pace of one,
Was the still death-march of the host begun ;
With a silent step went the cuirassed bands,
Like a lion's tread on the burning sands :
—And they gave no battle-shout.

But the deep hills pealed with a cry ere long,
When the Christians burst on the Paynim throng !
—With a sudden flash of lance and spear,
And a charge of the war-steed in full career,
It was Alvar Fanez came !

He that was wrapt with no funeral shroud,
Had passed before like a threatening cloud !
And the storm rushed down on the tented plain,
And the Archer-Queen, with her bands, lay slain ;
For the Cid upheld his fame.

Then a terror fell on the King Bucar,
And the Libyan kings who had joined his war ;
And their hearts grew heavy, and died away,
And their hands could not wield an assagay,
For the dreadful things they saw !

For it seemed where Minaya his onset made,
There were seventy thousand knights arrayed,
All white as snow on Nevada's steep ;
And they came like the foam of a roaring deep ;
—'Twas a sight of fear and awe !

And the crested form of a warrior tall,
With a sword of fire went before them all ;
With a sword of fire, and a banner pale,
And a blood-red cross on his shadowy mail ;
He rode in the battle's van !

There was fear in the path of his dim white horse,
There was death in the giant-warrior's course !
Where his banner streamed with its ghostly light,
Where his sword blazed out, there was hurrying flight—
For it seemed not the sword of man !

The field and the river grew darkly red,
As the king and leaders of Afric fled ;
There was work for the men of the Cid that day !
—They were weary at eve, when they ceased to slay,
As reapers whose task is done !

The kings and the leaders of Afric fled !
The sails of their galleys in haste were spread ;
But the sea had its share of the Paynim slain,
And the bow of the desert was broke in Spain.
—So the Cid to his grave passed on !

THE CID'S RISING.

'Twas the deep mid-watch of the silent night,
And Leon in slumber lay,
When a sound went forth in rushing might,
Like an army on its way !
In the stillness of the hour,
When the dreams of sleep have power,
And men forget the day.

Through the dark and lonely streets it went,
Till the slumberers woke in dread ;
The sound of a passing armament,
With the charger's stony tread.
There was heard no trumpet's peal,
But the heavy tramp of steel,
As a host's to combat led.

Through the dark and lonely streets it passed,
And the hollow pavement rang,
And the towers as with a sweeping blast,
Rocked to the stormy clang !
But the march of the viewless train
Went on to royal fane,
Where a priest his night-hymn sang.

There was knocking that shook the marble floor,
And a voice at the gate, which said—
"That the Cid Ruy Diez, the Campeador,
Was there in his arms arrayed ;
And that with him from the tomb,
Had the Count Gonzalez come
With a host, uprisen to aid !

And they came from the buried king that lay
At rest in that ancient fane ;
For he must be armed on the battle-day
With them to deliver Spain !"
—Then the march went sounding on
And the Moors by noontide sun
Were dust on Tolosa's plain.

THE CARAVAN IN THE DESERTS.

Call it not loneliness, to dwell
In woodland shade or hermit dell,
Or the deep forest to explore,
Or wander Alpine regions o'er ;
For Nature there all joyous reigns,
And fills with life her wild domains :
A bird's light wing may break the air,
A wave, a leaf, may murmur there :
A bee the mountain flowers may seek
A chamois bound from peak to peak,
An eagle rushing to the sky,
Wake the deep echoes with his cry ;
And still some sound, thy heart to cheer,
Some voice, though not of man, is near,
But he, whose weary step hath traced
Mysterious Afric's awful waste—
Whose eye Arabia's wilds hath viewed,
Can tell thee what is solitude !
It is, to traverse lifeless plains,
Where everlasting stillness reigns,
And billowy sands and dazzling sky,
Seem boundless as infinity !
It is, to sink, with speechless dread,
In scenes unmeet for mortal tread,
Severed from earthly being's trace,
Alone, amidst eternal space !
'Tis noon—and fearfully profound,
Silence is on the desert round ;
Alone she reigns, above, beneath,
With all the attributes of death !
No bird the blazing heaven's may dare,
No insect bide the scorching air ;
The ostrich, though of sun-born race,
Seeks a more sheltered dwelling-place ;
The lion slumbers in his lair,
The serpent shuns the noontide glare ;
But slowly wind the patient train
Of camels o'er the blasted plain,
Where they and man may brave alone
The terrors of the burning zone.

Faint not, O pilgrims ! though on high,
As a volcano, flame the sky ;
Shrink not, though as a furnace glow
The dark-red seas of sand below ;
Though not a shadow save your own,
Across the dread expanse is thrown;

Mark ! where your feverish lips to lave,
Wide spreads the fresh transparent wave !
Urge your tired camels on, and take
Your rest beside yon glistening lake;
Thence, haply, cooler gales may spring,
And fan your brows with lighter wing.
Lo ! nearer now, its glassy tide
Reflects the date-tree on its side—
Speed on, pure draughts and genial air,
And verdant shade, await you there.
Oh glimpse of heaven ! to him unknown,
That hath not trod the burning zone!
Forward they press—they gaze dismayed—
The waters of the desert fade !
Melting to vapors that elude
The eye, the lip, they vainly wooed.[1]
What meteor comes ?—a purple haze
Hath half obscured the noontide rays ;[2]
Onward it moves in swift career,
A blush upon the atmosphere ;
Haste, haste ! avert the impending doom,
Fall prostrate ! tis the dread Simoom:
Bow down your faces—till the blast
On its red wing of flame hath passed,
Far bearing o'er the sandy wave
The viewless Angel of the Grave.

It came—'tis vanished—but hath left
The wanderers e'en of hope bereft ;
The ardent heart, the vigorous frame,
Pride, courage, strength, its power could tame.
Faint with despondence, worn with toil,
They sink upon the burning soil,
Resigned amidst those realms of gloom,
To find their death-bed and their tomb.[3]

But onward still ! yon distant spot
Of verdure can deceive you not ;
Yon palms, which tremulously seemed
Reflected as the waters gleamed,
Along the horizon's verge displayed,
Still rear their slender colonnade—
A landmark, guiding o'er the plain
The Caravan's exhausted train.
Fair is that little Isle of Bliss,
The desert's emerald oasis !
A rainbow on the torrent's wave,
A gem embosomed in the grave,
A sunbeam on a stormy day
Its beauty's image might convey !
Beauty, in horror's lap that sleeps,
While silence round her vigil keeps.
—Rest, weary pilgrims! calmly laid
To slumber in the acacia shade :
Rest, where the shrubs your camels bruise,
Their aromatic breath diffuse ;
Where softer light the sunbeams pour
Through the tall palm and sycamore ;
And the rich date luxuriant spreads
Its pendant clusters o'er your heads.
Nature once more, to seal your eyes,
Murmurs her sweetest lullabies ;
Again each heart the music hails
Of rustling leaves and sighing gales,
And oh ! to Afric's child how dear
The voice of fountains gushing near !
Sweet be your slumbers ! and your dreams
Of waving groves and rippling streams !

Far be the serpent's venomed coil
From the brief respite won by toil ;
Far be the awful shades of those
Who deep beneath the sands repose—
The hosts, to whom the desert's breath
Bore swift and stern the call of death,
Sleep ! nor may scorching blast invade,
The freshness of the acacia shade,

[1] The mirage, or vapor assuming the appearance of water.
[2] See the description of the Simoom in Bruce's Travels.
[3] The extreme languor and despondence produced by the Simoom, even when its effects are not fatal, have been described by many travellers.

But gales of heaven your spirits bless,
With life's best balm—Forgetfulness !
Till night from many an urn diffuse
The treasures of her world of dews.

The day hath closed—the moon on high
Walks in her cloudless majesty.
A thousand stars to Afric's heaven
Serene magnificence have given ;
Pure beacons of the sky, whose flame
Shines forth eternally the same.
Blest be their beams, whose holy light
Shall guide the camel's footsteps right,
And lead, as with a track divine,
The pilgrim to his prophet's shrine !
—Rise! bid your Isle of Palms adieu!
Again your lonely march pursue,
While airs of night are freshly blowing,
And heavens with softer beauty glowing.
—'Tis silence all : the solemn scene
Wears, at each step, a ruder mien ;
For giant rocks, at distance piled,
Cast their deep shadows o'er the wild.
Darkly they rise—what eye hath viewed
The caverns of their solitude ?
Away ! within those awful cells
The savage lord of Afric dwells !
Heard ye his voice ?—the lion's roar
Swells as when billows break on shore.
Well may the camel shake with fear,
And the steed pant—his foe is near ;
Haste ! light the torch, bid watch-fires throw,
Far o'er the waste, a ruddy glow ;
Keep vigil—guard the bright array,
Of flames that scare him from his prey ;
Within their magic circle press,
O wanderers of the wilderness !
Heap high the pile, and by its blaze
Tell the wild tales of elder days.
Arabia's wondrous lore—that dwells
On warrior deeds, and wizard spells;
Enchanted domes, 'mid scenes like these,
Rising to vanish with the breeze ;
Gardens, whose fruits are gems, that shed
Their light where mortal may not tread,
And spirits, o'er whose pearly halls
The eternal billow heaves and falls.
—With charms like these, of mystic power,
Watchers ! beguile the midnight hour.
—Slowly that hour hath rolled away,
And star by star withdraws its ray.
Dark children of the sun ! again
Your own rich orient hails his reign.
He comes, but veiled—with sanguine glare
Tinging the mists that load the air ;
Sounds of dismay, and signs of flame,
The approaching hurricane proclaim.
'Tis death's red banner streams on high—
Fly to the rocks for shelter !—fly !
Lo ! darkening o'er the fiery skies,
The pillars of the desert rise !
On, in terrific grandeur wheeling,
A giant host, the heavens concealing,
They move, like mighty genii forms,
Towering immense 'midst clouds and storms.
Who shall escape ?—with awful force
The whirlwind bears them on their course ;
They join, they rush resistless on,
The landmarks of the plain are gone;
The steps, the forms, from earth effaced,
Of those who trod the burning waste !
All whelmed, all hushed :—none left to bear
Sad record how they perished there!
No stone their tale of death shall tell—
The desert guards its mysteries well;
And o'er the unfathomed sandy deep,
Where low their nameless relics sleep
Oft shall the future pilgrim tread,
Nor know his steps are on the dead.

MARIUS AMONGST THE RUINS OF CARTHAGE.

["Marius, during the time of his exile, seeking refuge in Africa, had landed at Carthage, when an officer, sent by the Roman governor of Africa, came and thus addressed him: 'Marius, I come from the Prætor Sextilius, to tell you that he forbids you to set foot in Africa. If you obey not, he will support the Senate's decree, and treat you as a public enemy.' Marius, upon hearing this, was struck dumb with grief and indignation. He uttered not a word for some time, but regarded the officer with a menacing aspect. At length the officer inquired what answer he should carry to the governor. 'Go and tell him,' said the unfortunate man, with a sigh, 'that thou hast seen the exiled Marius sitting on the ruins of Carthage.'"—See PLUTARCH.]

'Twas noon, and Afric's dazzling sun on high,
With fierce resplendence filled the unclouded sky;
No zephyr waved the palm's majestic head,
And smooth alike the seas and deserts spread;
While desolate, beneath a blaze of light,
Silent and lonely as at dead of night,
The wreck of Carthage lay. Her prostrate fanes
Had strewed their precious marble o'er the plains;
Dark weeds and grass the column had o'ergrown,
The lizard basked upon the altar-stone;
Whelmed by the ruins of their own abodes,
Had sunk the forms of heroes and of gods;
While near, dread offspring of the burning day!
Coiled 'midst forsaken halls, the serpent lay.

There came an exile, long by fate pursued,
To shelter in that awful solitude.
Well did that wanderer's high yet faded mien
Suit the sad grandeur of the desert-scene;
Shadowed, not veiled, by locks of wintry snow,
Pride sat, still mighty, on his furrowed brow;
Time had not quenched the terrors of his eye,
Nor tamed his glance of fierce ascendancy;
While the deep meaning of his features told
Ages of thought had o'er his spirit rolled,
Nor dimmed the fire that might not be controlled;
And still did power invest his stately form,
Shattered, but yet unconquered, by the storm.
But slow his step—and where, not yet o'erthrown,
Still towered a pillar 'midst the waste alone,
Faint with long toil, his weary limbs he laid,
To slumber in its solitary shade.
He slept—and darkly, on his brief repose,
The indignant genius of the scene arose.
Clouds robed his dim unearthly form, and spread
Mysterious gloom around his crownless head—
Crownless, but regal still. With stern disdain
The kingly shadow seemed to lift his chain,
Gazed on the palm, his ancient sceptre torn,
And his eye kindled with immortal scorn!

"And sleepst thou, Roman?" cried his voice austere;
"Shall son of Latium find a refuge *here?*
Awake! arise! to speed the hour of Fate,
When Rome shall fall, as Carthage desolate!
Go! with her children's flower, the free, the brave,
People the silent chambers of the grave;
So shall the course of ages yet to be,
More swiftly waft the day, avenging me!

"Yes, from the awful gulf of years to come,
I hear a voice that prophesies her doom;
I see the trophies of her pride decay,
And her long line of triumphs pass away,
Lost in the depths of time--while sinks the star
That led her march of heroes from afar!
Lo! from the frozen forests of the North,
The sons of slaughter pour in myriads forth!
Who shall awake the mighty?—will thy woe,
City of thrones! disturb the realms below?
Call on the dead to hear thee! let thy cries
Summon their shadowy legions to arise,
Array the ghosts of conquerors on thy walls!
—Barbarians revel in their ancient halls,
And their lost children bend the subject knee,
'Midst the proud tombs and trophies of the free.
Bird of the sun! dread eagle! borne on high,
A creature of the empyreal—thou, whose eye
Was lightning to the earth—whose pinion waved
In haughty triumph o'er a world enslaved;
Sink from thy heavens! for glory's noon is o'er,
And rushing storms shall bear thee on no more!
Closed is thy regal course—thy crest is torn,
And thy plume vanished from the realms of morn.
The shaft hath reached thee!—rest with chiefs and kings,
Who conquered in the shadow of thy wings;
Sleep! while thy foes exult around their prey,
And share thy glorious heritage of day!
But darker years shall mingle with the past,
And deeper vengeance shall be mine at last.
O'er the seven hills I see destruction spread,
And Empire's widow veils with dust her head!
Her gods forsake each desolated shrine,
Her temples moulder to the earth, like mine:
'Midst fallen palaces she sits alone,
Calling heroic shades from ages gone,
Or bids the nations 'midst her deserts wait
To learn the fearful oracles of Fate!

"Still sleepst thou, Roman? Son of Victory, rise!
Wake to obey the avenging Destinies!
Shed by thy mandate, soon thy country's blood
Shall swell and darken Tiber's yellow flood!

My children's manès call—awake ! prepare
The feast they claim !—exult in Rome's despair !
Be thine ear closed against her suppliant cries,
Bid thy soul triumph in her agonies ;
Let carnage revel, e'en her shrines among,
Spare not the valiant, pity not the young !
Haste ! o'er her hills the sword's libation shed,
And wreak the curse of Carthage on her head ! "

The vision flies—a mortal step is near ;
Whose echoes vibrate on the slumberer's ear,
He starts, he wakes to woe—before him stands
The unwelcome messenger of harsh commands,
Whose faltering accents tell the exiled chief,
To seek on other shores a home for grief.
—Silent the wanderer sat—but on his cheek
The burning glow far more than words might speak ;
And, from the kindling of his eye, there broke
Language, where all the indignant soul awoke,
Till his deep thought found voice—then, calmly stern,
And sovereign in despair, he cried, " Return !
Tell him who sent thee hither, thou hast seen
Marius, the exile, rest where Carthage once hath been ! "

SONG.

FOUNDED ON AN ARABIAN ANECDOTE.

Away ! though still thy sword is red
With life-blood from my sire,
No drop of thine may now be shed
To quench my bosom's fire ;
Though on my heart 'twould fall more blest
Than dews upon the desert's breast.

I've sought thee 'midst the sons of men,
Through the wide city's fanes ;
I've sought thee by the lion's den,
O'er pathless, boundless plains ;
No step that marked the burning waste,
But mine its lonely course hath traced.

Thy name hath been a baleful spell
O'er my dark spirit cast ;
No thought may dream, no words may tell,
What there unseen hath passed :
This withered cheek, this faded eye,
Are seals of thee—behold ! and fly !

Hath not my cup for thee been poured,
Beneath the palm-tree's shade ?
Hath not soft sleep thy frame restored,
Within my dwelling laid ?
What though unknown—yet who shall rest
Secure—if not the Arab's guest ?

Haste thee ! and leave my threshold-floor
Inviolate and pure !
Let not thy presence tempt me more,—
Man may not thus endure !
Away ! I bear a fettered arm,
A heart that burns—but must not harm !
Begone ! outstrip the swift gazelle !

The wind in speed subdue !
Fear cannot fly so swift, so well,
As vengeance shall pursue ;
And hate, like love, in parting pain,
Smiles o'er *one* hope—we meet again !

To-morrow—and the avenger's hand
The warrior's dart is free !
E'en now, no spot in all thy land,
Save *this*, had sheltered thee :
Let blood the monarch's hall profane,—
The Arab's tent must bear no stain !

Fly ! may the desert's fiery blast
Avoid thy secret way !
And sternly, till thy steps be past,
Its whirlwinds sleep to-day !
I would not that thy doom should be
Assigned by Heaven to aught but me.

THE CROSS OF THE SOUTH.

[The beautiful constellation of the Cross is seen only in the southern hemisphere. The following lines are supposed to be addressed to it by a Spanish traveller in South America.]

In the silence and grandeur of midnight I tread,
Where savannahs, in boundless magnificence, spread,
And bearing sublimely their snow-wreaths on high,
The far Cordilleras unite with the sky.

The fir-tree waves o'er me, the fire-flies' red light
With its quick-glancing splendor illumines the night ;
And I read in each tint of the skies and the earth
How distant my steps from the land of my birth.

But to thee, as thy lode-stars resplendently burn
In their clear depths of blue, with devotion I turn,
Bright Cross of the South ! and beholding thee shine,
Scarce regret the loved land of the olive and vine.

Thou recallest the ages when first o'er the main
My fathers unfolded the ensign of Spain,
And planted their faith in the regions that see
Its unperishing symbol emblazoned in thee.

How oft in their course o'er the ocean unknown,
Where all was mysterious, and awful, and lone,
Hath their spirit been cheered by thy light, when the deep
Reflected its brilliance in tremulous sleep !

As the vision that rose to the lord of the world,[1]
When first his bright banner of faith was unfurled ;
Even such, to the heroes of Spain, when their prow
Made the billows the path of their glory, wert thou.

[1] Constantine.

And to me, as I traversed the world of the west,
Through deserts of beauty in stillness that rest ;
By forests and rivers untamed in their pride,
Thy hues have a language, thy course is a guide.

Shine on—my own land is a far distant spot,
And the stars of thy sphere can enlighten it not ;
And the eyes that I love, though e'en now they may be
O'er the firmament wandering, can gaze not on thee !

But thou to my thoughts are a pure-blazing shrine,
A fount of bright hopes, and of visions divine ;
And my soul, as an eagle exulting and free,
Soars high o'er the Andes to mingle with thee.

THE SLEEPER OF MARATHON.

I LAY upon the solemn plain,
And by the funeral mound,
Where those who died not there in vain,
Their place of sleep had found.

'Twas silent where the free blood gushed,
When Persia came arrayed—
So many a voice had there been hushed,
So many a footstep stayed.

I slumbered on the lonely spot
So sanctified by death :
I slumbered—but my rest was not
As theirs who lay beneath.

For on my dreams, that shadowy hour,
They rose—the chainless dead,—
All armed they sprang, in joy, in power,
Up from their grassy bed.

I saw their spears, on that red field,
Flash as in time gone by—
Chased to the seas without his shield,
I saw the Persian fly.

I woke—the sudden trumpet's blast
Called to another fight—
From visions of our glorious past,
Who doth not wake in night ?

TO MISS F. A. L.

ON HER BIRTHDAY.

WHAT wish can friendship form for thee,
What brighter star invoke to shine ?
Thy path from every thorn is free,
And every rose is thine !

Life hath no purer joy in store,
Time hath no sorrow to efface ;
Hope cannot paint one blessing more
Than memory can retrace !

Some hearts a boding fear might own,
Had Fate to *them* thy portion given,
Since many an eye by tears alone
Is taught to gaze on Heaven !

And there are virtues oft concealed,
Till roused by anguish from repose,
As odorous trees no balm will yield
Till from their wounds it flows.

But fear not *thou* the lesson fraught
With Sorrow's chastening power to know ;
Thou needest not thus be sternly taught,
"To melt at others' woe."

Then still, with heart as blest, as warm,
Rejoice thou in thy lot on earth :
Ah ! why should virtue dread the *storm*,
If *sunbeams* prove her worth ?

WRITTEN IN THE FIRST LEAF OF THE ALBUM OF THE SAME.

What first should consecrate as thine,
The volume, destined to be fraught
With many a sweet and playful line,
With many a pure and pious thought ?

It should be, what a loftier strain
Perchance less meetly would impart ;
What never yet was poured in vain,—
The blessing of the grateful heart—

For kindness, which hath soothed the hour
Of anxious grief, of weary pain,
And oft, with its beguiling power,
Taught languid Hope to smile again.

Long shall that fervent blessing rest
On thee and thine, and heavenwards borne,
Call down such peace to soothe *thy* breast,
As *thou* wouldst bear to all that mourn.

TO THE SAME.

ON THE DEATH OF HER MOTHER.

Say not 'tis fruitless, nature's holy tear,
Shed by affection o'er a parent's bier !
By earthly sorrow strengthened for the skies,
Till the sad heart, whose pangs exalt its love,
With its lost treasure seeks a home—above.

But grief will claim her hour,—and He, whose eye
Looks pitying down on nature's agony,
He, in whose love the righteous calmly sleep,
Who bids us hope, forbids us not to weep !
He, too, hath wept—and sacred be the woes
Once borne by Him, their inmost source who knows,
Searches each wounds and bids His Spirit bring
Celestial healing on its dove-like wing !
And who but He shall soothe, when one dread stroke,
Ties, that were fibres of the soul, hath broke ?
Oh ! well may those, yet lingering here, deplore
The vanished light, that cheers their path no more !
The Almighty hand, which many a blessing dealt,
Sends its keen arrows not to be unfelt !
By fire and storm Heaven tries the Christian's worth,
And joy departs, to wean us from the earth,
Where still too long, with beings born to die,
Time hath dominion o'er Eternity.

Yet not the less, o'er all the heart hath lost,
Shall Faith rejoice when Nature grieves the most ;
Then comes her triumph ! through the shadowy gloom,
Her star in glory rises from the tomb,
Mounts to the day-spring, leaves the cloud below,
And gilds the tears that cease not yet to flow !
Yes, all is o'er ! fear, doubt, suspense are fled,
Let brighter thoughts be with the virtuous dead !
The final ordeal of the soul is past,
And the pale brow is sealed to Heaven at last ![1]

And thou, loved spirit ! for the skies mature,
Steadfast in faith, in meek devotion pure ;
Thou that didst make the home thy presence blest,
Bright with the sunshine of thy gentle breast,
Where peace a holy dwelling-place had found,
Whence beamed her smile benignantly around ;
Thou, that to bosoms widowed and bereft
Dear, precious records of thy worth hast left,
The treasured gem of sorrowing hearts to be,
Till Heaven recall surviving love to thee !

O cherished and revered ! fond memory well
On thee, with sacred, sad delight, may dwell !
So pure, so blest thy life, that death alone
Could make more perfect happiness thine own ;
More blest than dew on Hermon's brow that falls,
Each drop to life some latent virtue calls ;
Awakes some purer hope, ordained to rise,
He came—thy cup of joy, serenely bright,
Full to the last, still flowed in cloudless light ;
He came—an angel, bearing from on high
The all it wanted—Immortality !

A DIRGE.

Weep for the early lost !—
How many flowers were mingled in the crown
Thus, with the lovely, to the grave gone down,
E'en when life promised most,
How many hopes have withered—they that bow
To Heaven's dread will, feel all its mysteries now.

Did the young mother's eye,
Behold her child, and close upon the day,
Ere from its glance the awakening spirit's ray
In sunshine could reply ?—
Then look for clouds to dim the fairest morn !
Oh ! strong is faith, if woe like this be borne.

[1] "Till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads."—Rev. vii. 3.

For there is hushed on earth
A voice of gladness—there is veiled a face,
Whose parting leaves a dark and silent place,
By the once-joyous hearth
A smile hath passed, which filled its home with light,
A soul, whose beauty made that smile so bright!

But there *is* power with faith!
Power, e'en though nature o'er the untimely grave
Must weep, when God resumes the gem He gave;
For sorrow comes of Death,
And with a yearning heart we linger on,
When they, whose glance unlocked its founts, are gone!

But glory from the dust,
And praise to Him, the merciful, for those
On whose bright memory love may still repose,
With an immortal trust!
Praise for the dead, who leave us, when they part,
Such hope as she hath left—"the pure in heart."

THE MAREMMA.

["NELLO DELLA PIETRA had espoused a lady of noble family at Sienna, named Madonna Pia. Her beauty was the admiration of Tuscany, and excited in the heart of her husband a jealousy, which, exasperated by false reports and groundless suspicions, at length drove him to the desperate resolution of Othello. It is difficult to decide whether the lady was quite innocent, but so Dante represents her. Her husband brought her into the Maremma, which, then, as now, was a district destructive of health. He never told his unfortunate wife the reason of her banishment to so dangerous a country. He did not deign to utter complaint or accusation. He lived with her alone, in cold silence, without answering her questions, or listening to her remonstrances. He patiently waited till the pestilential air should destroy the health of this young lady. In a few months she died. Some chronicles, indeed, tell us that Nello used the dagger to hasten her death. It is certain that he survived her, plunged in sadness and perpetual silence. Dante had, in this incident, all the materials of an ample and very poetical narrative. But he bestows on it only four verses. He meets in Purgatory three spirits; one was a captain who fell fighting on the same side with him in the battle of Campaldino; the second, a gentleman assassinated by the treachery of the House of Este; the third was a woman unknown to the poet, and who, after the others had spoken, turned towards him with these words:—

'Recorditi di me; che son la Pia,
Sienna mi fe, disfecemi Maremma,
Salsi colui che inanellata pria
Disposando m' avea con la sua gemma.'"
Purgatorio.]

"Mais elle etait du monde, ou les plus belles choses,
Ont le pire destin;
Et Rose elle a vécu ce que vivent les roses,
L'espace d'un Matin."—MALHERBE.

THERE are bright scenes beneath Italian skies,
Where glowing suns their purest light diffuse,
Uncultured flowers in wild profusion rise,
And nature lavishes her warmest hues;

But trust thou not her smile, her balmy breath,
Away ! her charms are but the pomp of Death !

He, in the vine-clad bowers, unseen is dwelling,
Where the cool shade its freshness round thee throws,
His voice, in every perfumed zephyr swelling :
With gentlest whisper lures thee to repose :
And the soft sounds that through the foliage sigh,
But woo thee still to slumber and to die.

Mysterious danger lurks, a syren, there,
Not robed in terrors, or announced in gloom,
By stealing o'er thee in the scented air,
And veiled in flowers, that smile to deck thy tomb ;
How may we deem, amidst their deep array,
That heaven and earth but flutter to betray ?

Sunshine, and bloom, and verdure ! Can it be,
That these but charm us with destructive wiles ?
Where shall we turn, O Nature, if in *thee*
Danger is masked in beauty—death in smiles ?
Oh ! still the Circe of that fatal shore,
Where she, the sun's bright daughter, dwelt of yore !

There, year by year, the secret peril spreads,
Disguised in loveliness, its baleful reign
And viewless blights o'er many a landscape sheds,
Gay with the riches of the south, in vain,
O'er fairy bowers and palaces of state,
Passing unseen, to leave them desolate.

And pillared halls, whose airy colonnades
Were formed to echo music's choral tone,
Are silent now, amidst deserted shades,[1]
Peopled by sculpture's graceful forms alone ;
And fountains dash unheard, by lone alcoves,
Neglected temples and forsaken groves.

And there, where marble nymphs, in beauty gleaming,
'Midst the deep shades of plane and cypress rise,
By wave or grot might Fancy linger, dreaming
Of old Arcadia's woodland deities,—
Wild visions !—there no sylvan powers convene,—
Death reigns the genius of the Elysian scene.

Ye, too, illustrious hills of Rome ! that bear
Traces of mightier beings on your brow,
O'er you that subtle spirit of the air
Extends the desert of his empire now ;
Broods o'er the wrecks of altar, fane, and dome,
And makes the Cæsar's ruined halls his home.

[1] See Madame de Staël's fine description, in her *Corinne*, of the Villa Borghese, deserted on account of malaria.

Youth, valor, beauty, oft have felt his power,
His crowned and chosen victims ; o'er their lot
Hath fond affection wept each blighted flower
In turn was loved and mourned, and is forgot.
But one who perished, left a tale of woe,
Meet for as deep a sigh as pity can bestow.

A voice of music, from Sienna's walls,
Is floating joyous on the summer air,
And there are banquets in her stately halls,
And graceful revels of the gay and fair,
And brilliant wreaths the altar have arrayed,
Where meet her noblest youth and loveliest maid.

To that young bride each grace hath Nature given,
Which glows on Art's divinest dream,—her eye
Hath a pure sunbeam of her native heaven—
Her cheek a tinge of morning's richest dye ;
Fair as that daughter of the south, whose form
Still breathes and charms, in Vinci's colors warm.[1]

But is she blest ?—for sometimes o'er her smile
A soft sweet shade of pensiveness is cast ;
And in her liquid glance there seems awhile
To dwell some thought whose soul is with the past ;
Yet soon it flies—a cloud that leaves no trace,
On the sky's azure, of its dwelling-place,

Perchance, at times, within her heart may rise
Remembrance of some early love or woe,
Faded, yet scarce forgotten—in her eyes
Wakening the half-formed tear that may not flow ;
Yet radiant seems her lot as aught on earth,
Where still some pining thought comes darkly o'er our mirth.

The world before her smiles—its changeful gaze
She hath not proved as yet ; her path seems gay
With flowers and sunshine, and the voice of praise
Is still the joyous herald of her way ;
And beauty's light around her dwells, to throw
O'er every scene its own resplendent glow.

Such is the young Bianca—graced with all
That nature, fortune, youth, at once can give ;
Pure in their loveliness—her looks recall
Such dreams, as ne'er life's early bloom survive ;
And, when she speaks, each thrilling tone is fraught
With sweetness, born of high and heavenly thought.

And he to whom are breathed her vows of faith
Is brave and noble—child of high descent,

[1] An allusion to Leonardo da Vinci's picture of his wife, Mona Lisa, supposed to be the most perfect imitation of Nature ever exhibited in painting.—See Vasari in his *Lives of the Painters.*

He hath stood fearless in the ranks of death,
'Mid slaughtered heaps, the warrior's monument :
And proudly marshalled his Carroccio's[1] way,
Amidst the wildest wreck of war's array.

And his the chivalrous, commanding mien,
Where high-born grandeur blends with courtly grace ;
Yet may a lightning glance at times be seen,
Of fiery passions, darting o'er his face,
And fierce the spirit kindling in his eye—
But e'en while yet we gaze, its quick, wild flashes die.

And calmly can Pietra smile, concealing,
As if forgotten, vengeance, hate, remorse ;
And veil the workings of each darker feeling,
Deep in his soul concentrating its force :
But yet he loves—O ! who hath loved, nor known
Affection's power exalt the bosom all its own ?

The days roll on—and still Bianca's lot
Seems as a path of Eden—thou might'st deem
That grief, the mighty chastener, had forgot
To wake her soul from life's enchanted dream ;
And, if her brow a moment's sadness wear,
It sheds but grace more intellectual there.

A few short years, and all is changed—her fate
Seems with some deep mysterious cloud o'ercast.
Have jealous doubts transformed to wrath and hate,
The love whose glow expression's power surpassed ?
Lo ! on Pietra's brow a sullen gloom
Is gathering day by day, prophetic of her doom.

O ! can he meet that eye, of light serene,
Whence the pure spirit looks in radiance forth,
And view that bright intelligence of mien
Formed to express but thoughts of loftiest worth,
Yet deem that vice within that heart can reign ?
—How shall he e'er confide in aught on earth again ?

In silence oft, with strange vindictive gaze,
Transient, yet filled with meaning, stern and wild,
Her features, calm in beauty, he surveys,
Then turns away, and fixes on her child
So dark a glance, as thrills a mother's mind
With some vague fear, scarce owned, and undefined.

There stands a lonely dwelling, by the wave
Of the blue deep which bathes Italia's shore,
Far from all sounds, but rippling seas that lave
Gray rocks with foliage richly shadowed o'er,

[1] See the description of this sort of consecrated war-chariot in Sismondi's *Histoire des Republiques Italiennes*, &c., vol. i., p. 294.

And sighing winds, that murmur through the wood,
Fringing the beach of that Hesperian flood.

Fair is that house of solitude—and fair
The green Maremma, far around it spread,
A sun-bright waste of beauty—yet an air
Of brooding sadness o'er the scene is shed,
No human footstep tracks the lone domain,
The desert of luxuriance glows in vain.

And silent are the marble halls that rise
'Mid founts, and cypress walks, and olive groves:
All sleeps in sunshine, 'neath cerulean skies,
And still around the sea-breeze lightly roves;
Yet every trace of man reveals alone,
That there life once had flourished—and is gone.

There, till around them slowly, softly stealing,
The summer air, deceit in every sigh,
Came fraught with death, its power no sign revealing,
Thy sires, Pietra, dwelt, in days gone by;
And strains of mirth and melody have flowed
Where stands, all voiceless now, the still abode.

And thither doth her lord, remorseless, bear
Bianca with her child—his altered eye
And brow a stern and fearful calmness wear,
While his dark spirit seals their doom—to die;
And the deep bodings of his victim's heart,
Tell her, from fruitless hope at once to part.

It is the summer's glorious prime—and blending
Its blue transparence with the skies, the deep,
Each tint of heaven upon its breast descending,
Scarce murmurs as it heaves, in glassy sleep,
And on its wave reflects, more softly bright,
That lovely shore of solitude and light.

Fragrance in each warm southern gale is breathing,
Decked with young flowers the rich Maremma glows,
Neglected vines the trees are wildly wreathing,
And the fresh myrtle in exuberance blows,
And far around, a deep and sunny bloom
Mantles the scene, as garlands robe the tomb.

Yes! 'tis *thy* tomb, Bianca! fairest flower!
The voice that calls thee speaks in every gale,
Which, o'er thee breathing with insidious power,
Bids the young roses of thy cheek turn pale,
And, fatal in its softness, day by day,
Steals from that eye some trembling spark away.

But sink not yet ; for there are darker woes,
Daughter of beauty ! in thy spring-morn fading,
Sufferings more keen for thee reserved than those
Of lingering death, which thus thine eye are shading!
Nerve then thy heart to meet that bitter lot ;
'Tis agony—but soon to be forgot !

What deeper pangs maternal hearts can wring,
Than hourly to behold the spoiler's breath
Shedding, as mildews on the bloom of spring,
O'er Infancy's fair cheek the blight of death ?
To gaze and shrink, as gathering shades o'ercast
The pale smooth brow, yet watch it to the last !

Such pangs were thine, young mother !—Thou didst bend
O'er thy fair boy, and raised his drooping head ;
And faint and hopeless, far from every friend,
Keep thy sad midnight vigil near his bed,
And watch his patient, supplicating eye,
Fixed upon thee—on thee !—who couldst no aid supply :

There was no voice to cheer thy lonely woe
Through those dark hours—to thee the wind's low sigh,
And the faint murmur of the ocean's flow,
Came like some spirit whispering—" He must die ! "
And thou didst vainly clasp him to the breast
His young and sunny smile so oft with hope had blest.

'Tis past—that fearful trial—he is gone ;
But thou, sad mourner ! hast not long to weep ;
The hour of nature's chartered peace comes on,
And thou shalt share thine infant's holy sleep.
A few short sufferings yet—and death shall be
As a bright messenger from heaven to thee.

But ask not—hope not—one relenting thought
From him who doomed thee thus to waste away,
Whose heart, with sullen, speechless vengeance fraught,
Broods in dark triumph o'er thy slow decay ;
And coldly, sternly, silently can trace
The gradual withering of each youthful grace.

And yet the day of vain remorse shall come
When thou, bright victim ! on his dreams shalt rise
As an accusing angel—and thy tomb,
A martyr's shrine, be hallowed in his eyes !
Then shall thine innocence his bosom wring,
More than thy fancied guilt with jealous pangs could sting.

Lift thy meek eyes to heaven—for all on earth,
Young sufferer ! fades before thee—Thou art lone—
Hope, Fortune, Love, smiled brightly on thy birth,
Thine hour of death is all affliction's own !

It is our task to suffer—and our fate
To learn that mighty lesson, soon or late.

The season's glory fades—the vintage-lay
Through joyous Italy resounds no more ;
But mortal loveliness hath passed away,
Fairer than aught in summer's glowing store.
Beauty and youth are gone—behold them such
As death hath made them with his blighting touch !

The summer's breath came o'er them—and they died !
Softly it came to give luxuriance birth,
Called forth young nature in her festal pride,
But bore to them their summons from the earth !
Again shall blow that mild, delicious breeze,
And wake to life and light all flowers—but these.

No sculptured urn, nor verse thy virtues telling,
O lost and loveliest one ! adorns thy grave ;
But o'er that humble cypress-shaded dwelling
The dewdrops glisten, and the wildflowers wave—
Emblems more meet, in transient light and bloom,
For thee, who thus didst pass in brightness to the tomb !

A TALE OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

A FRAGMENT.

The moonbeam, quivering o'er the wave,
Sleeps in pale gold on wood and hill,
The wild wind slumbers in its cave,
And heaven is cloudless—earth is still !
The pile, that crowns yon savage height
With battlements of Gothic might,
Rises in softer pomp arrayed,
Its massy towers half lost in shade,
Half touched with mellowing light !
The rays of night, the tints of time,
Soft-mingling on its dark-gray stone,
O'er its rude strength and mien sublime,
A placid smile have thrown ;

And far beyond, where wild and high,
Bounding the pale blue summer sky,
A mountain vista meets the eye,
Its dark, luxuriant woods assume
A penciled shade, a softer gloom ;
Its jutting cliffs have caught the light,
Its torrents glitter through the night,
While every cave and deep recess
Frowns in more shadowy awfulness.

Scarce moving on the glassy deep,
Yon gallant vessel seems to sleep,
But darting from its side,
How swiftly does its boat design
A slender, silvery, waving line
Of radiance o'er the tide !

No sound is on the summer seas,
But the low dashing of the oar,
And faintly sighs the midnight breeze
Through woods that fringe the rocky shore.
That boat has reached the silent bay,
The dashing oar has ceased to play,
The breeze has murmured and has died
In forest shades, on ocean's tide.
No step, no tone, no breath of sound
Disturbs the loneliness profound ;
And midnight spreads o'er earth and main
A calm so holy and so deep,
That voice of mortal were profane,
To break on nature's sleep !
It is the hour for thought to soar,
High o'er the cloud of earthly woes ;
For rapt devotion to adore,
For passion to repose ;
And virtue to forget her tears,
In visions of sublimer spheres !
For oh ! those transient gleams of heaven,
To calmer, purer spirits given,
Children of hallowed peace, are known
In solitude and shade alone !
Like flowers that shun the blaze of noon,
To blow beneath the midnight moon,
The garish world they will not bless,
But only live in loneliness !

Hark ! did some note of plaintive swell
Melt on the stillness of the air ?
Or was it fancy's powerful spell
That woke such sweetness there ?
For wild and distant it arose,
Like sounds that bless the bard's repose,
When in lone wood or mossy cave
He dreams beside some fountain-wave,
And fairy worlds delight the eyes
Wearied with life's realties.
—Was it illusion ?—yet again
Rises and falls the enchanted strain,
Mellow, and sweet, and faint,
As if some spirit's touch had given
The soul of sound to harp of heaven
To soothe a dying saint !

Is it the mermaid's distant shell,
Warbling beneath the moonlit wave ?
—Such witching tones might lure full well
The seaman to his grave !
Sure from no mortal touch ye rise,
Wild, soft, aerial melodies !
—Is it the song of woodland-fay
From sparry grot, or haunted bower ?
Hark ! floating on, the magic lay
Draws near yon ivied tower !
Now nearer still, the listening ear
May catch sweet harp-notes, faint, yet clear ;
And accents low, as if in fear,
Thus murmur, half suppressed :—
"Awake ! the moon is bright on high,
The sea is calm, the bark is nigh,
The world is hushed to rest !"
Then sinks the voice—the strain is o'er,
Its last low cadence dies along the shore.

Fair Bertha hears the expected song,
Swift from her tower she glides along ;
No echo to her tread awakes,
Her fairy step no slumber breaks,
And, in that hour of silence deep,
While all around the dews of sleep
O'erpower each sense, each eyelid steep,
Quick throbs her heart with hope and fear,
Her dark eye glistens with a tear.
Half-wavering now, the varying cheek
And sudden pause her doubts bespeak,
The lip now flushed, now pale as death,
The trembling frame, the fluttering breath !

Oh ! in that moment, o'er her soul,
What struggling passions claim control !
Fear, duty, love, in conflict high,
By turns have won the ascendancy ;
And as, all tremulously bright,
Streams o'er her face the beam of night,
What thousand mixed emotions play
O'er that fair face, and melt away :
Like forms whose quick succession gleams
O'er fancy's rainbow-tinted dreams ;
Like the swift glancing lights that rise
'Midst the wild cloud of stormy skies,
And traverse ocean o'er ;
So in that full, impassioned eye
The changeful meanings rise and die,
Just seen—and then no more !
But oh ! too short that pause—again
Thrills to her heart that witching strain :—
"Awake ! the midnight moon is bright ;
Awake ! the moments wing their flight !
Haste ! or they speed in vain !"

O, call of love ! thy potent spell
O'er that weak heart prevails too well ;
The "still small voice" is heard no more
That pleaded duty's cause before,
And fear is hushed, and doubt is gone,
And pride forgot, and reason flown !
Her cheek, whose color came and fled,
Resumes its warmest, brightest red,
Her step its quick elastic tread,
Her eye its beaming smile !
Through lonely court and silent hall
Flits her light shadow o'er the wall,
And still that low, harmonious call
Melts on her ear the while !
Though love's quick ear alone could tell
The words its accents faintly swell :—
"Awake, while yet the lingering night
And stars and seas befriend our flight,
O ! haste, while all is well !

The halls, the courts, the gates, are past,
She gains the moonlit beach at last.
Who waits to guide her trembling feet ?
Who flies the fugitive to greet ?
He, to her youthful heart endeared
By all it e'er had hoped and feared,
Twined with each wish, with every thought,
Each day-dream fancy e'er had wrought,
Whose tints portray, with flattering skill,
What brighter worlds alone fulfil !
—Alas ! that aught so fair should fly,
Thy blighting wand, Reality !
A chieftain's mien her Osbart bore,
A pilgrim's lowly robes he wore,
Disguise that vainly strove to hide
Bearing and glance of martial pride ;
For he in many a battle scene,
On many a rampart-breach had been ;
Had sternly smiled at danger nigh,
Had seen the valiant bleed and die,
And proudly reared on hostile tower,
Midst falchion-clash, and arrowy shower,
Britannia's banner high.
And though some ancient feud had taught
His Bertha's sire to loathe his name,
More noble warrior never fought
For glory's prize, or England's fame.
And well his dark, commanding eye,
And form and step of stately grace,
Accorded with achievements high,
Soul of emprise and chivalry,
Bright name, and generous race !
His cheek, embrowned by many a sun,
Tells a proud tale of glory won,

Of vigil, march, and combat rude,
Valor, and toil, and fortitude !
E'en while youth's earliest blushes threw [hue,
Warm o'er that cheek their vivid
His gallant soul, his stripling form,
Had braved the battle's rudest storm ;
When England's conquering archers stood,
And dyed thy plain, Poitiers, with blood,
When shivered axe, and cloven shield,
And shattered helmet, strewed the field,
And France around her king in vain
Had marshalled valor's noblest train,
In that dread strife, his lightning eye
Had flashed with transport keen and high,
And 'midst the battle's wildest tide,
Throbbed his young heart with hope and pride.
Alike that fearless heart could brave,
Death on the war-field or the wave ;
Alike in tournament or fight,
That ardent spirit found delight !
Yet oft, 'midst hostile scenes afar,
Bright o'er his soul a vision came,
Rising, like some benignant star,
On stormy seas, or plains of war,
To soothe, with hopes more dear than fame,
The heart that throbbed to Bertha's name !
And 'midst the wildest rage of fight,
And in the deepest calm of night,
To her his thoughts would wing their flight,
With fond devotion warm ;
Oft would those glowing thoughts portray
Some home, from tumults far away,
Graced with that angel form !
And now his spirit fondly deems
Fulfilled its loveliest, dearest dreams !

Who, with pale cheek, and locks of snow,
In minstrel garb, attends the chief ?
The moonbeam on his thoughtful brow
Reveals a shade of grief.
Sorrow and time have touched his face,
With mournful yet majestic grace,
Soft as the melancholy smile
Of sunset on some ruined pile !
—It is the bard whose song had power
To lure the maiden from her tower ;
The bard whose wild, inspiring lays,
E'en in gay childhood's earliest days,
First woke, in Osbert's kindling breast,
The flame that will not be represt,
The pulse that throbs for praise !
Those lays had banished from his eye,
The bright, soft tears of infancy,
Had soothed the boy to calm repose,
Had hushed his bosom's earliest woes ;
And when the light of thought awoke,
When first young reason's day-spring broke,
More powerful still, they bade arise
His spirit's burning energies !
Then the bright dream of glory warmed,
Then the loud pealing war-song charmed,
The legends of each martial line,
The battle-tales of Palestine :
And oft, since then, *his* deeds had proved,
Themes of the lofty lays he loved !
Now, at triumphant's love's command,
Since Osbert leaves his native land,
Forsaking glory's high career,
For her, than glory far more dear ;
Since hope's gay dream, and meteor ray,
To distant regions points his way,
That there Affection's hands may dress
A fairy bower for happiness ;
That fond, devoted bard, though now
Time's wintry garland wreaths his brow,

Though quenched the sunbeam of his eye,
And fled his spirit's buoyancy,
And strength and enterprise are past,
Still follows constant to the last!

Though his sole wish was but to die
'Midst the calm scenes of days gone by;
And all that hallows and endears
The memory of departed years—
Sorrow, and joy, and time, have twined
To those loved scenes, his pensive mind;
Ah! what can tear the links apart,
That bind his chieftain to his heart?
What smile but *his* with joy can light
The eye obscured by age's night?
Last of a loved and honored line,
Last tie to earth in life's decline,
Till death its lingering spark shall dim,
That faithful eye must gaze on him!

Silent and swift, with footstep light,
Haste on those fugitives of night,
They reached the boat—the rapid oar
Soon wafts them from the wooded shore,
The bark is gained—a gallant few,
Vassals of Osbert, form its crew;
The pennant, in the moonlight beam
With soft suffusion glows;
From the white sail a silvery gleam
Falls on the wave's repose;
Long shadows undulating play,
From mast and streamer, o'er the bay;
But still so hushed the summer-air,
They tremble, 'midst that scene so fair,
Lest morn's first beam behold them there.
—Wake, viewless wanderer! breeze of night,
From river-wave, or mountain-height,
Or dew-bright couch of moss and flowers,
By haunted spring, in forest bowers;
Or dost thou lurk in pearly cell,
In amber grot, where mermaids dwell,
And caverned gems their lustre throw
O'er the red sea-flowers' vivid glow?
Where treasures, not for mortal gaze,
In solitary splendor blaze;
And sounds, ne'er heard by mortal ear,
Swell through the deep's unfathomed sphere?
What grove of that mysterious world
Holds thy light wing in slumber furled?
Awake! o'er glittering seas to rove,
Awake! to guide the bark of love!

Swift fly the midnight hours, and soon
Shall fade the bright propitious moon;
Soon shall the waning stars grow pale,
E'en now—but lo! the rustling sail
Swells to the new-sprung ocean gale!
The bark glides on—their fears are o'er,
Recedes the bold romantic shore,
Its features mingling fast;
Gaze, Bertha, gaze, thy lingering eye
May still each lovely scene descry
Of years forever past!
There wave the woods, beneath whose shade,
With bounding step, thy childhood played;
'Midst ferny glades, and mossy lawns,
Free as their native birds and fawns;
Listening the sylvan sounds, that float
On each low breeze, 'midst dells remote;
The ringdove's deep, melodious moan,
The rustling deer in thickets lone;
The wild-bee's hum, the aspen's sigh,

The wood-stream's plaintive harmony.
Dear scenes of many a sportive hour,
There thy own mountains darkly tower!
'Midst their gray rocks no glen so rude,
But thou hast loved its solitude!
No path so wild but thou hast known,
And traced its rugged course alone!
The earliest wreath that bound thy hair,
Was twined of glowing heath-flowers there.
There, in the dayspring of thy years,
Undimmed by passions or by tears,
Oft, while thy bright, enraptured eye
Wandered o'er ocean, earth, or sky,
While the wild breeze that round thee blew,
Tinged thy warm cheek with richer hue;
Pure as the skies that o'er thy head
Their clear and cloudless azure spread;
Pure as that gale, whose light wing drew
Its freshness from the mountain dew;
Glowed thy young heart with feelings high,
A heaven of hallowed ecstasy!
Such days were thine! ere love had drawn
A cloud o'er that celestial dawn!
As the clear dews in morning's beam,
With soft reflected coloring stream,
Catch every tint of eastern gem,
To form the rose's diadem;
But vanish when the noontide hour
Glows fiercely on the shrinking flower;
Thus in thy soul each calm delight,
Like morn's first dewdrops, pure and bright,
Fled swift from passion's blighting fire,
Or lingered only to expire!

Spring, on thy native hills again,
Shall bid neglected wildflowers rise,
And call forth, in each grassy glen,
Her brightest emerald dyes!
There shall the lonely mountain-rose,
Wreath of the cliffs, again disclose;
'Midst rocky dells, each well-known stream,
Shall sparkle in the summer beam;
The birch, o'er precipice and cave,
Its feathery foliage still shall wave;
The ash 'midst rugged clefts unveil
Its coral clusters to the gale,
And autumn shed a warmer bloom
O'er the rich heath and glowing broom,
But thy light footstep there no more,
Each path, each dingle shall explore;
In vain may smile each green recess,
—Who now shall pierce its loneliness?
The stream through shadowy glens may stray,
—Who now shall trace its glistening way?
In solitude, in silence deep,
Shrined 'midst her rocks, shall echo sleep,
No lute's wild swell again shall rise,
To wake her mystic melodies.
All soft may blow the mountain air,
—It will not wave thy graceful hair!
The mountain rose may bloom and die,
—It will not meet thy smiling eye!
But like those scenes of vanished days,
Shall others ne'er delight;
Far lovelier lands shall meet thy gaze,
Yet seem not half so bright!
O'er the dim woodlands fading hue,
Still gleams yon Gothic pile on high;
Gaze on, while yet 'tis thine to view
That home of infancy!
Heed not the night-dew's chilling power,
Heed not the sea-wind's coldest hour,
But pause, and linger on the deck,
Till of those towers no trace, no spec,
Is gleaming o'er the main;
For when the mist of morn shall rise,

Blending the sea, the shores, the skies,
That home, once vanished, from thine eyes,
Shall bless them ne'er again !
There the dark tales and songs of yore,
First with strange transport filled thy soul,
E'en while their fearful, mystic lore,
From thy warm cheek the life-bloom stole ;
There, while thy father's raptured ear,
Dwelt fondly on a strain so dear,
And in his eye the trembling tear,
Revealed his spirit's trance ;
How oft, those echoing halls along,
Thy thrilling voice has swelled the song,
Tradition wild of other days,
Or troubadour's heroic lays,
Or legend of romance !
Oh ! many an hour has there been thine,
That memory's pencil oft shall dress
In softer shades, and tints that shine
In mellowed loveliness !
While thy sick heart, and fruitless tears,
Shall mourn, with deep and fond regret,
The sunshine of thine early years,
Scarce deemed so radiant—till it set !
The cloudless peace, unprized till gone,
The bliss, till vanished, hardly known !

On rock and turret, wood and hill,
The fading moonbeams linger still ;
Still, Bertha, gaze on yon gray tower,
At evening's last and sweetest hour,
While varying still, the western skies
Flushed the clear seas with rainbow-dyes,
Whose warm suffusions glowed and passed,
Each richer, lovelier, than the last ;
How oft, while gazing on the deep,
That seemed a heaven of peace to sleep,
As if its wave, so still, so fair,
More frowning mien might never wear,
The twilight calm of mental rest,
Would steal in silence o'er thy breast,
And wake that dear and balmy sigh,
That softly breathes the spirit's harmony !
—Ah ! ne'er again shall ours to thee be given,
Of joy on earth—so near allied to Heaven !

Why starts the tear to Bertha's eye ?
Is not her long-loved Osbert nigh ?
Is there a grief his voice, his smile,
His words, are fruitless to beguile ?
—Oh ! bitter to the youthful heart,
That scarce a pang, a care has known,
The hour when first from scenes we part,
Where life's bright spring has flown !
Forsaking, o'er the world to roam,
That little shrine of peace—our home.
E'en if delighted fancy throw
O'er that cold world, her brightest glow,
Painting its untried paths with flowers
That will not live in earthly bowers
(Too frail, too exquisite, to bear
One breath of life's ungenial air) ;
E'en if such dreams of hope arise,
As Heaven alone can realize ;
Cold were the breast that would not heave
One sigh, the home of youth to leave;
Stern were the heart that would not swell
To breathe life's saddest word—farewell !
Though earth has many a deeper woe,
Though tears, more bitter far, must flow,
That hour, whate'er our future lot,
That first found grief, is ne'er forgot!

Such was the pang of Bertha's heart,
The thought, that bade the tear-drop start ;
And Osbert by her side

Heard the deep sigh, whose bursting swell
Nature's fond struggle told too well ;
And days of future bliss portrayed,
And love's own eloquence essayed,
To soothe his plighted bride !
Of bright Arcadian scenes he tells,
In that sweet land to which they fly ;
The vine-clad rocks, the fragrant dells
Of blooming Italy.
For he had roved a pilgrim there,
And gazed on many a spot so fair,
It seemed like some enchanted grove,
Where only peace, and joy, and love,
Those exiles of the world, might rove
And breathe its heavenly air ;
And, all unmixed with ruder tone,
Their "wood-notes wild" be heard alone !

Far from the frown of stern control
That vainly would subdue the soul,
There shall their long affianced hands,
Be joined in consecrated bands,
And in some rich, romantic vale,
Circled with heights of Alpine snow,
Where citron-woods enrich the gale,
And scented shrubs their balm exhale,
And flowering myrtles blow ;
And 'midst the mulberry boughs on high,
Weaves the wild vine her tapestry ;
On some bright streamlet's emerald side,
Where cedars wave, in graceful pride,
Bosomed in groves, their home shall rise,
A sheltered bower of Paradise !
Thus would the lover soothe to rest
With tales of hope her anxious breast ;
Nor vain that dear enchanting lore,
Her soul's bright visions to restore,
And bid gay phantoms of delight
Float, in soft coloring, o'er her sight.

—Oh ! youth, sweet May-morn, fled so soon,
Far brighter than life's loveliest noon
How oft thy spirit's buoyant power
Will triumph, e'en in sorrow's hour
Prevailing o'er regret !
As rears its head the elastic flower
Though the dark tempest's recent shower
Hang on its petals yet !

Ah ! not so soon can hope's gay smile
The aged bard to joy beguile ;
Those silent years that steal away
The cheek's warm rose, the eye's bright ray,
Win from the mind a nobler prize,
E'en all its buoyant energies !
For him the April days are past,
When grief was but a fleeting cloud ;
No transient shade will sorrow cast,
When age the spirit's might has bowed !

And, as he sees the land grow dim,
That native land, now lost to him,
Fixed are his eyes, and clasped his hands,
And long in speechless grief he stands.
So desolately calm his air,
He seems an image, wrought to bear
The stamp of deep, though hushed despair ;
Motion and life no sign bespeaks,
Save that the night-breeze, o'er his cheeks,
Just waves his silvery hair !
Naught else could teach the eye to know
He was no sculptured form of woe !

Long gazing o'er the darkening flood,
Pale in that silent grief he stood ;
Till the cold moon was waning fast,
And many a lovely star had died,
And the gray heavens deep shadows cast,
Far o'er the slumbering tide ;
And robed in one dark solemn hue,
Arose the distant shore to view.

Then, starting from his trance of woe,
Tears, long suppressed, in freedom flow.
While thus his wild and plaintive strain,
Blends with the murmur of the main.

THE BARD'S FAREWELL.

Thou setting moon ! when next thy rays
Are trembling on the shadowy deep,
The land, now fading from my gaze,
These eyes in vain shall weep ;
And wander o'er the lonely sea,
And fix their tearful glance on thee,
On thee ! whose light so softly gleams,
Through the green oaks that fringe my native streams.

But, 'midst those ancient groves, no more
Shall I thy quivering lustre hail,
Its plaintive strain my heart must pour,
To swell a foreign gale ;
The rocks, the woods, whose echoes woke,
When its full tones their stillness broke,
Deserted now, shall hear alone,
The brook's wild voice. the wind's mysterious moan.

And oh ! ye fair, forsaken halls,
Left by your lord to slow decay,
Soon shall the trophies on your walls
Be mouldering fast away !
There shall no choral songs resound,
There shall no festal board be crowned ;
But ivy wreath the silent gate,
And all be hushed, and cold, and desolate.

No banner from the stately tower,
Shall spread its blazoned folds on high,
There the wild brier and summer flower
Unmarked, shall wave and die.
Home of the mighty ! thou art lone,
The noonday of thy pride is gone,
And, 'midst thy solitude profound,
A step shall echo like unearthly sound !

From thy cold hearths no festal blaze
Shall fill the hall with ruddy light,
Nor welcome, with convivial rays,
Some pilgrim of the night ;
But there shall grass luxuriant spread,
As o'er the dwellings of the dead ;
And the deep swell of every blast,
Seem a wild dirge for years of grandeur past.

And I—my joy of life is fled,
My spirit's power, my bosom's glow,
The raven locks that graced my head,
Wave in a wreath of snow !
And where the star of youth arose,
I deemed life's lingering ray should close,
And those loved trees my tomb o'ershade,
Beneath whose arching bowers my childhood played.

Vain dream ; that tomb in distant earth
Shall rise, forsaken and forgot ;
And thou, sweet land, that gavest me birth,
A grave must yield me not !
Yet, haply he for whom I leave
Thy shores, in life's dark winter-eve,
When cold the hand, and closed the lays,
And mute the voice he loved to praise,
O'er the hushed harp one tear may shed,
And one frail garland o'er the minstrel's bed !

BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST.

'Twas night in Babylon : yet many a beam,
Of lamps far glittering from her domes on high,
Shone, brightly mingling in Euphrates' stream
With the clear stars of that Chaldean sky,
Whose azure knows no cloud : each whispered sigh
Of the soft night-breeze through her terrace bowers,
Bore deepening tones of joy and melody,
O'er an illumined wilderness of flowers ;
And the glad city's voice went up from all her towers.

But prouder mirth was in the kingly hall,
Where, 'midst adoring slaves, a gorgeous band,
High at the stately midnight festival,
Belshazzar sat enthroned. There luxury's hand
Had showered around all treasures that expand
Beneath the burning East ; all gems that pour
The sunbeams back ; all sweets of many a land,
Whose gales waft incense from their spicy shore ;
—But mortal pride looked on, and still demanded more.

With richer zest the banquet may be fraught,
A loftier theme may swell the exulting strain !
The lord of nations spoke,—and forth were brought
The spoils of Salem's devastated fane.
Thrice holy vessels !—pure from earthly stain,
And set apart, and sanctified to Him,
Who deigned within the oracle to reign,
Revealed, yet shadowed ; making noonday dim,
To that most glorious cloud between the cherubim.

They came, and louder pealed the voice of song,
And pride flashed brighter from the kindling eye,
And He who sleeps not heard the elated throng,
In mirth that plays with thunderbolts, defy
The Rock of Zion !—Fill the nectar high,
High in the cups of consecrated gold !
And crown the bowl with garlands, ere they die,
And bid the censers of the temple hold
Offerings to Babel's gods, the mighty ones of old !

Peace !—is it but a phantom of the brain,
Thus shadowed forth, the senses to appal,
Yon fearful vision ?—Who shall gaze again
To search its cause ?—Along the illumined wall,
Startling, yet riveting the eyes of all.
Darkly it moves,—a hand, a human hand,
O'er the bright lamps of that resplendent hall,

In silence tracing, as a mystic wand,
Words all unknown, the tongue of some far distant land!

There are pale cheeks around the regal board,
And quivering limbs, and whispers deep and low,
And fitful starts!—the wine, in triumph poured,
Untasted foams, the song hath ceased to flow,
The waving censer drops to earth—and lo!
The king of men, the ruler, girt with mirth,
Trembles before a shadow!—Say not so!
—The child of dust, with guilt's foreboding sight,
Shrinks from the dread Unknown, the avenging Infinite!

"But haste ye!—bring Chaldea's gifted seers,
The men of prescience!—haply to *their* eyes,
Which track the future through the rolling spheres,
Yon mystic sign may speak in prophecies.
They come—the readers of the midnight skies,
They that gave voice to visions—but in vain!
Still wrapt in clouds the awful secret lies,
It hath no language 'midst the starry train,
Earth has no gifted tongue Heaven's mysteries to explain.

Then stood forth one, a child of other sires,
And other inspiration!—one of those
Who on the willows hung their captive lyres,
And sat, and wept, where Babel's river flows.
His eye was bright, and yet the pale repose
Of his pure features half o'erawed the mind,
Telling of inward mysteries—joys and woes
In lone recesses of the soul enshrined;
Depths of a being sealed and severed from mankind.

Yes!—what was earth to him, whose spirit passed
Time's utmost bounds!—on whose unshrinking sight
Ten thousand shapes of burning glory cast
Their full resplendence?—Majesty and might
Were in his dreams;—for him the veil of light
Shrouding Heaven's inmost sanctuary and throne,
The curtain of the unutterably bright
Was raised!—to him, in fearful splendor shown,
Ancient of Days! e'en Thou madest thy dread presence known.

He spoke: the shadows of the things to come
Passed o'er his soul: "O king, elate in pride!
God hath sent forth the writing of thy doom—
The one, the living God by thee defied!
He, in whose balance earthly lords are tried,
Hath weighed, and found thee wanting. 'Tis decreed
The conqueror's hands thy kingdom shall divide,
The stranger to thy throne of power succeed!
Thy days are full—they come,—the Persian and the Mede!"

There fell a moment's thrilling silence round—
A breathless pause !—the hush of hearts that beat,
And limbs that quiver :—Is there not a sound,
A gathering cry, a tread of hurrying feet ?
—'Twas but some echo in the crowded street,
Of far heard revelry ; the shout, the song,
The measured dance to music wildly sweet,
That speeds the stars their joyous course along—
Away ; nor let a dream disturb the festal throng !

Peace yet again ! Hark ! steps in tumult flying,
Steeds rushing on, as o'er a battle-field !
The shouts of hosts exulting or defying,
The press of multitudes that strive or yield !
And the loud startling clash of spear and shield,
Sudden as earthquake's burst ; and, blent with these,
The last wild shriek of those whose doom is sealed
In their full mirth ;—all deepening on the breeze,
As the long stormy roll of far-advancing seas !

And nearer yet the trumpet's blast is swelling,
Loud, shrill, and savage, drowning every cry :
And, lo ! the spoiler in the regal dwelling,
Death—bursting on the halls of revelry !
Ere on their brows one fragile rose-leaf die,
The sword hath raged through joy's devoted train ;
Ere one bright star be faded from the sky,
Red flames, like banners, wave from dome and fane :
Empire is lost and won—Belshazzar with the slain.[1]

[1] As originally written, the following additional stanzas (afterwards omitted) concluded this poem,—

Fallen is the golden city !—in the dust,
Spoiled of her crown, dismantled of her state,
She that hath made the strength of towers her trust,
Weeps by her dead, supremely desolate !
She that beheld the nations at her gate,
Thronging in homage, shall be called no more
Lady of kingdoms. Who shall mourn her fate ?
Her guilt is full, her march of triumph o'er—
What widowed land shall now *her* widowhood deplore ?

Sit thou in silence ! Thou that wert enthroned
On many waters !—thou, whose augurs read
The language of the planets, and disowned
The Mighty Name it blazons !—veil thy head,
Daughter of Babylon !—the sword is red
From thy destroyer's harvest, and the yoke
Is on thee, O most proud !—for thou hast said,
"I am, and none beside !" The Eternal spoke :
Thy glory was a spoil, thine idol-gods were broke !

But go thou forth, O Israel !—wake ! rejoice !
Be clothed with strength, as in thine ancient day !
Renew the sound of harps, the exulting voice,
The mirth of timbrels !—loose the chain, and say
God hath redeemed His people !—from decay
The silent and the trampled shall arise !
—Awake !—put on thy beautiful array,

THE LAST CONSTANTINE.

* * * * "Thou strivest nobly,
When hearts of sterner stuff perhaps had sunk;
And o'er thy fall, if it be so decreed,
Good men will mourn, and brave men will shed tears.
* * * * * * * * * * *
* * * * Fame I look not for,
But to sustain, in Heaven's all-seeing eye,
Before my fellow-men, in mine own sight,
With graceful virtue and becoming pride,
The dignity and honor of a man,
Thus stationed as I am, I will do all
That man may do."

MISS BAILLIE'S *Constantine Palæologus.*

I.

The fires grew pale on Rome's deserted shrines,
In the dim grot the Pythia's voice had died;
—Shout, for the city of the Constantines,
The rising city of the billow side,
The City of the Cross!—great ocean's bride,
Crowned with her birth she sprung! Long ages past,
And still she looked in glory o'er the tide,
Which at her feet barbaric riches cast
Poured by the burning East, all joyously and fast.

II.

Long ages past!—they left her porphyry halls
Still trod by kingly footsteps. Gems and gold
Broidered her mantle, and her castled walls
Frowned in their strength; yet there were signs which told
The days were full. The pure high faith of old
Was changed; and on her silken couch of sleep
She lay, and murmured if a rose-leaf's fold
Disturbed her dreams; and called her slaves to keep
Their watch, that no rude sound might reach her o'er the deep.

III.

But there are sounds that from the regal dwelling
Free hearts and fearless only may exclude;

O long-forsaken Zion!—to the skies
Send up on every wind thy choral melodies!

And lift thy head!—Behold thy sons returning,
Redeemed from exile, ransomed from the chain,
Light hath revisited the house of mourning;
She that on Judah's mountains wept in vain,
Because her children were not—dwells again,
Girt—with the lovely!—through thy streets, once more.
City of God! shall pass the bridal train,
And the bright lamps their festive radiance pour,
And the triumphal hymns thy joy of youth restore!

'Tis not alone the wind, at midnight swelling,
Breaks on the soft repose by luxury wooed!
There are unbidden footsteps, which intrude
Where the lamps glitter, and the wine-cup flows,
And darker hues have stained the marble, strewed
With the fresh myrtle, and the short-lived rose,
And Parian walls have rung to the dread march of foes.

IV.

A voice of multitudes is on the breeze,
Remote, yet solemn as the night-storm's roar
Through Ida's giant-pines! Across the seas
A murmur comes, like that the deep winds bore
From Tempé's haunted river to the shore
Of the reed-crowned Eurotas; when, of old,
Dark Asia sent her battle-myriads o'er
The indignant wave, which would not be controlled,
But past the Persian's chain in boundless freedom rolled.

V.

And it is thus again!—Swift oars are dashing
The parted waters, and a light is cast
On their white foam-wreaths, from the sudden flashing
Of Tartar spears, whose ranks are thickening fast,
There swells a savage trumpet on the blast,
A music of the deserts, wild and deep,
Wakening strange echoes, as the shores are passed
Where low 'midst Ilion's dust her conquerors sleep,
O'ershadowing with high names each rude sepulchral heap.

VI.

War from the West!—the snows on Thracian hills
Are loosed by Spring's warm breath; yet o'er the lands
Which Hæmus girds, the chainless mountain rills
Pour down less swiftly than the Moslem bands.
War from the East!—'midst Araby's lone sands,
More lonely now the few bright founts may be,
While Ismael's bow is bent in warrior-hands
Against the Golden City of the sea:
—Oh! for a soul to fire thy dust, Thermopylæ!

VII.

Hear yet again, ye mighty!—Where are they,
Who, with their green Olympic garlands crowned,
Leaped up, in proudly beautiful array,
As to a banquet gathering, at the sound
Of Persia's clarion?—Far and joyous round,
From the pine-forests, and the mountain-snows,
And the low sylvan valleys, to the bound
Of the bright waves, at freedom's voice they rose!
Hath it no thrilling tone to break the tomb's repose?

VIII.

They slumber with their swords !—The olive-shades
In vain are whispering their immortal tale !
In vain the spirit of the past pervades,
The soft winds, breathing through each Grecian vale.
—Yet must *Thou* wake, though all unarmed and pale,
Devoted City !—Lo ! the Moslem's spear,
Red from its vintage, at thy gates ; his sail
Upon thy waves, his trumpet in thine ear !
Awake ! and summon those, who yet, perchance, may hear !

IX.

Be hushed, thou faint and feeble voice of weeping :
Lift ye the banner of the Cross on high,
And call on chiefs, whose noble sires are sleeping
In their proud graves of sainted chivalry,
Beneath the palms and cedars, where they sigh
To Syrian gales !—The sons of each brave line,
From their baronial halls shall hear your cry,
And seize the arms which flashed round Salem's shrine,
And wield for you the swords once waved for Palestine !

X.

All still, all voiceless !—and the billow's roar
Alone replies !—Alike *their* soul is gone
Who shared the funeral feast on Œta's shore,
And *theirs* that o'er the field of Ascalon
Swelled the crusader's hymn ! Then gird thou on
Thine armor, Eastern Queen ! and meet the hour
Which waits thee ere the day's fierce work is done,
With a strong heart ; so may thy helmet tower
Unshivered through the storm, for generous hope is power !

XI.

But linger not,—array thy men of might !
The shores, the seas, are peopled with thy foes.
Arms through thy cypress groves are gleaming bright,
And the dark huntsmen of the wild, repose
Beneath the shadowy marble porticoes
Of thy proud villas. Nearer and more near,
Around thy walls the sons of battle close ;
Each hour, each moment, hath its sound of fear,
Which the deep grave alone is chartered not to hear !

XII.

Away ! bring wine, bring odors, to the shade
Where the tall pine and poplar blend on high !
Bring roses, exquisite, but soon to fade !
Snatch every brief delight,—since we must die !—
Yet is the hour, degenerate Greeks ! gone by,

For feast in vine-wreathed bower, or pillared hall ;
Dim gleams the torch beneath yon fiery sky,
And deep and hollow is the tambour's call,
And from the startled hand the untasted cup will fall.

XIII.

The night—the glorious oriental night,
Hath lost the silence of her purple heaven,
With its clear stars ! the red artillery's light,
Athwart her worlds of tranquil splendor driven,
To the still firmament's expanse hath given
Its own fierce glare, wherein each cliff and tower
Starts wildly forth ; and now the air is riven
With thunder-bursts, and now dull smoke-clouds lower,
Veiling the gentle moon, in her most hallowed hour.

XIV.

Sounds from the waters, sounds upon the earth,
Sounds in the air, of battle ! Yet with these
A voice is mingling, whose deep tones give birth
To Faith and Courage ! From luxurious ease
A gallant few have started ! O'er the seas,
From the Seven Towers, their banner waves its sign,
And Hope is whispering in the joyous breeze,
Which plays amidst its folds. That voice was *thine ;*
Thy soul was on that band, devoted Constantine.

XV.

Was Rome thy parent ? Didst thou catch from *her*
The fire that lives in thine undaunted eye ?
—That city of the throne and sepulchre
Hath given proud lessons how to reign and die !
Heir of the Cæsars ! did that lineage high,
Which, as a triumph to the grave, hath passed,
With its long march of sceptred imagery,
The heroic mantle o'er thy spirit cast ?
—Thou ! of an eagle-race the noblest and the last !

XVI.

Vain dreams ! upon that spirit hath descended
Light from the living Fountain, whence each thought
Springs pure and holy ! in that eye is blended
A spark, with Earth's triumphal memories fraught,
And, far within a deeper meaning, caught
From worlds unseen. A hope, a lofty trust,
Whose resting-place on buoyant wing is sought
(Though through its veil, seen darkly from the dust),
In realms where Time no more hath power upon the just.

XVII.

Those were proud days, when on the battle plain
And in the sun's bright face, and 'midst the array

Of awe-struck hosts, and circled by the slain,
The Roman cast his glittering mail away,
And while a silence, as of midnight, lay
O'er breathless thousands at his voice who started,
Called on the unseen, terrific powers that sway
The heights, the depths, the shades ; then, fearless-hearted,
Girt on his robe of death, and for the grave departed !

XVIII.

But then, around him as the javelins rushed,
From earth to heaven swelled up the loud acclaim;
And, ere his heart's last free libation gushed,
With a bright smile the warrior caught his name
Far floating on the winds ! And Victory came,
And made the hour of that immortal deed
A life, in fiery feeling ! Valor's aim
Had sought no loftier guerdon. Thus to bleed,
Was to be Rome's high star !—He died—and had his meed.

XIX.

But praise—and dearer, holier praise, be theirs,
Who, in the stillness and the solitude
Of hearts pressed earthwards by a weight of cares,
Uncheered by Fame's proud hope, the ethereal food
Of restless energies, and only viewed
By Him whose eye, from his eternal throne,
Is on the soul's dark places ; have subdued
And vowed themselves with strength till then unknown,
To some high martyr task, in secret and alone.

XX.

Theirs be the bright and sacred names, enshrined
Far in the bosom ! for their deeds belong,
Not to the gorgeous faith which charmed mankind
With its rich pomp of festival and song,
Garland, and shrine, and incense-bearing throng ;
But to that Spirit, hallowing, as it tries
Man's hidden soul in whispers, yet more strong
Than storm or earthquake's voice ; for *thence* arise
All that mysterious world's unseen sublimities.

XXI.

Well might *thy* name, brave Constantine ! awake
Such thought, such feeling !—But the scene again
Burst on my vision, as the day-beams break
Through the red sulphurous mists : the camp, the plain,
The terraced palaces, the dome-capt fane,
With its bright cross fixed high in crowning grace ;
Spears on the ramparts, galleys on the main,
And, circling all with arms, that turbaned race,
The sun, the desert, stamped in each dark haughty face.

XXII.

Shout, ye seven hills! Lo! Christian pennons streaming
Red o'er the waters! Hail, deliverers, hail!
Along your billowy wake the radiance gleaming
Is Hope's own smile! They crowd the swelling sail,
On, with the foam, the sunbeam and the gale,
Borne, as a victor's car! The batteries pour
Their clouds and thunders; but the rolling veil
Of smoke floats up the exulting winds before!
—And oh! the glorious burst of that bright sea and shore!

XXIII.

The rocks, waves, ramparts, Europe's, Asia's coast,
All thronged! one theatre for kingly war!
A monarch girt with his barbaric host,
Points o'er the beach his flashing scimitar!
Dark tribes are tossing javelins from afar,
Hands waving banners o'er each battlement,
Decks, with their serried guns, arrayed to bar
The promised aid: but hark! a shout is sent
Up from the noble barks!—the Moslem line is rent!

XXIV.

On, on through rushing flame, and arrowy shower,
The welcome prows have cleft their rapid way:
And, with the shadows of the vesper hour,
Furled their white sails, and anchored in the bay.
Then were the streets with song and torch-fire gay,
Then the Greek wines flowed mantling in the light
Of festal halls—and there was joy!—the ray
Of dying eyes, a moment wildly bright,
The sunset of the soul, ere lost to mortal sight!

XXV.

For vain that feeble succor! Day by day
The imperial towers are crumbling and the sweep
Of the vast engines, in their ceaseless play,
Comes powerful, as when Heaven unbinds the deep!
—Man's heart is mightier than the castled steep,
Yet will it sink when earthly hope is fled;
Man's thoughts work darkly in such hours, and sleep
Flies far: and in *their* mien, the walls who tread,
Things by the brave untold, may fearfully be read!

XXVI.

It was a sad and solemn task, to hold
Their midnight-watch on that beleaguered wall!
As the sea-wave beneath the bastions rolled,
A sound of fate was in its rise and fall;
The heavy clouds were as an empire's pall,

The giant shadows of each tower and fane
Lay like the graves ; a low mysterious call
Breathed in the wind, and, from the tented plain,
A voice of omens rose with each wild martial strain.

XXVII.

For they might catch the Arab charger's neighing,
The Thracian drum, the Tartar's drowsy song ;
Might almost hear the soldan's banner swaying,
The watchword muttered in some eastern tongue.
Then flashed the gun's terrific light along
The marble streets, all stillness—not repose,
And boding thoughts came o'er them, dark and strong ;
For heaven, earth, air, speak auguries to those
Who see their numbered hours fast pressing to the close.

XXVIII.

But strength is from the mightiest ! There is one
Still in the breach, and on the rampart seen,
Whose cheek shows paler with each morning sun,
And tells in silence, how the night hath been,
In kingly halls, a vigil : yet serene
The ray set deep within his thoughtful eye ;
And there is that in his collected mien,
To which the hearts of noble men reply,
With fires, partaking not this frame's mortality !

XXIX.

Yes ! call it not of lofty minds the fate,
To pass o'er earth in brightness, but alone ;
High power was made their birthright, to create
A thousand thoughts responsive to their own !
A thousand echoes of their spirit's tone
Start into life, where'er their path may be,
Still following fast ; as when the wind hath blown
O'er Indian groves, a wanderer wild and free,
Kindling and bearing flames afar from tree to tree !

XXX.

And it is thus with thee ! thy lot is cast
On evil days, thou Cæsar ! yet the few
That set their generous bosom to the blast
Which rocks thy throne—the fearless and the true,
Bear hearts wherein thy glance can still renew
The free devotion of the years gone by,
When from bright dreams the ascendant Roman drew
Enduring strength ! States vanish—ages fly—
But leave one task unchanged—to suffer and to die !

XXXI.

These are our nature's heritage. But thou,
The crowned with empire ! thou wert called to share

A cup more bitter. On thy fevered brow
The semblance of that buoyant hope to wear,
Which long had passed away ; alone to bear
The rush and pressure of dark thoughts, that came
As a strong billow in their weight of care ;
And, with all this, to smile ! for earth-born frame
These are stern conflicts, yet they pass, unknown to fame !

XXXII.

Her glance is on the triumph, on the field,
On the red scaffold ; and where'er, in sight
Of human eyes, the human soul is steeled
To deeds that seem as of immortal might,
Yet are proud nature's ! But her meteor-light
Can pierce no depths, no clouds ; it falls not where
In silence, and in secret, and in night,
The noble heart doth wrestle with despair,
And rise more strong than death from its unwitnessed prayer.

XXXIII.

Men have been firm in battle : they have stood
With a prevailing hope on ravaged plains,
And won the birthright of their hearths with blood,
And died rejoicing, 'midst their ancient fanes,
That so their children, undefiled with chains,
Might worship there in peace. But they that stand
When not a beacon o'er the wave remains,
Linked but to perish with a ruined land,
Where Freedom dies with them—call *these* a martyr-band ?

XXXIV.

But the world heeds them not. Or if, perchance,
Upon their strife it bend a careless eye,
It is but as the Roman's stoic glance
Fell on that stage where man's last agony
Was made *his* sport, who, knowing *one* must die,
Recked not *which* champion ; but prepared the strain,
And bound the bloody wreath of victory,
To greet the conqueror, while, with calm disdain,
The vanquished proudly met the doom he met in vain.

XXXV.

The hour of Fate comes on ! and it is fraught
With *this* of Liberty, that now the need
Is past to veil the brow of anxious thought,
And clothe the heart, which still beneath must bleed,
With Hope's fair-seeming drapery. We are freed
From tasks like these by misery ; one alone
Is left the brave, and rest shall be thy meed,
Prince, watcher, wearied one ! when thou hast shown
How brief the cloudy space which parts the grave and throne.

XXXVI.

The signs are full. They are not in the sky,
Nor in the many voices of the air,
Nor the sweet clouds. No fiery hosts on high
Toss their wild spears : no meteor-banners glare,
No comet fiercely shakes its blazing hair ;
And yet the signs are full : too truly seen
In the thinned ramparts, in the pale despair
Which lends one language to a people's mien,
And in the ruined heaps where walls and towers have been!

XXXVII.

It is a night of beauty : such a night
As, from the sparry grot or laurel-shade,
Or wave in marble cavern rippling bright,
Might woo the nymphs of Grecian fount and glade
To sport beneath its moonbeams, which pervade
Their forest-haunts ; a night, to rove alone
Where the young leaves by vernal winds are swayed,
And the reeds whisper, with a dreamy tone
Of melody, that seems to breathe from worlds unknown.

XXXVIII.

At night, to call from green Elysium's bowers
The shades of elder bards ; a night, to hold
Unseen communion with the inspiring powers
That made deep groves their dwelling-place of old
A night, for mourners, o'er the hallowed mould,
To strew sweet flowers ; for revellers to fill
And wreathe the cup ; for sorrows to be told
Which love hath cherished long—vain thoughts ! be still !
It is a night of fate, stamped with Almighty Will !

XXXIX.

It *should* come sweeping in the storm, and rending
The ancient summits in its dread career !
And with vast billows wrathfully contending,
And with dark clouds o'ershadowing every sphere !
But He, whose footstep shakes the earth with fear,
Passing to lay the sovereign cities low,
Alike in His omnipotence is near,
When the soft winds o'er spring's green pathway blow,
And when his thunders cleave the monarch mountain's brow.

XL.

The heavens in still magnificence look down
On the hushed Bosphorus, whose ocean stream
Sleeps, with its paler stars : the snowy crown
Of far Olympus, in the moonlight-gleam
Towers radiantly as when the Pagan's dream

Thronged it with gods, and bent the adoring knee !
—But that is past—and now the One Supreme
Fills not alone *those* haunts ; but earth, air, sea,
And Time, which presses on, to finish His decree.

XLI.

Olympus, Ida, Delphi ! ye, the thrones
And temples of a visionary night,
Brooding in clouds above your forest-zones,
And mantling thence the realms beneath with night :
Ye have looked down on battles ! Fear, and Flight,
And armed Revenge, all hurrying past below !
But there is yet a more appalling sight
For earth prepared, than e'er, with tranquil brow,
Ye gazed on from your world of solitude and snow !

XLII.

Last night a sound was in the Moslem camp,
And Asia's hills re-echoed to a cry
Of savage mirth !—Wild horn, and war-steeds' tramp,
Blent with the shout of barbarous revelry,
The clash of desert-spears ! Last night the sky
A hue of menace and of wrath put on,
Caught from red watch-fires, blazing far and high,
And countless, as the flames, in ages gone,
Streaming to heaven's bright queen from shadowy Lebanon !

XLIII.

But all is stillness now. May this be sleep
Which wraps those eastern thousands ? Yes, perchance
Along yon moonlit shore and dark-blue deep,
Bright are their visions with the Houri's glance,
And they behold the sparkling fountains dance
Beneath the bowers of paradise, that shed
Rich odors o'er the faithful ; but the lance,
The bow, the spear, now round the slumberers spread,
Ere fate fulfil such dreams, must rest beside the dead.

XLIV.

May this be sleep, this hush ?—A sleepless eye
Doth hold its vigil 'midst that dusky race !
One that would scan the abyss of destiny,
E'en now is gazing on the skies, to trace,
In those bright worlds, the burning isles of space,
Fate's mystic pathway ; they the while, serene,
Walk in their beauty ; but Mohammed's face
Kindles beneath their aspect, and his mien,
All fired with stormy joy, by that soft light is seen.

XLV.

Oh ! wild presumption of a conqueror's dream,
To gaze on those pure altar-fires, enshrined

In depths of blue infinitude, and deem
They shine to guide the spoiler of mankind
O'er fields of blood! But with the restless mind
It hath been ever thus, and they that weep
For worlds to conquer, o'er the bounds assigned
To human search, in daring pride would sweep,
As o'er the trampled dust wherein they soon must sleep.

XLVI.

But ye! that beamed on Fate's tremendous night,
When the storm burst o'er golden Babylon,
And ye, that sparkled with your wonted light
O'er burning Salem, by the Roman won;
And ye, that calmly viewed the slaughter done
In Rome's own streets, when Alaric's trumpet-blast
Rung through the Capitol; bright spheres! roll on!
Still bright, though empires fall; and bid man cast
His humbled eyes to earth, and commune with the past.

XLVII.

For it hath mighty lessons! from the tomb,
And from the ruins of the tomb, and where,
'Midst the wrecked cities in the desert's gloom,
All tameless creatures make their savage lair,
Thence comes its voice, that shakes the midnight air
And calls up clouds to dim the laughing day,
And thrills the soul;—yet bids us not despair,
But make one rock our shelter and our stay,
Beneath whose shade all else is passing to decay!

XLVIII.

The hours move on. I see a wavering gleam
O'er the hushed waters tremulously fall,
Poured from the Cæsar's palace: now the beam
Of many lamps is brightening in the hall,
And from its long arcades and pillars tall
Soft graceful shadows undulating lie
On the wave's heaving bosom, and recall
A thought of Venice, with her moonlight sky,
And festal seas and domes, and fairy pageantry.

XLIX.

But from that dwelling floats no mirthful sound!
The swell of flute and Grecian lyre no more,
Wafting an atmosphere of music round,
Tells the hushed seaman, gliding past the shore,
How monarchs revel there!—Its feasts are o'er—
Why gleam the lights along its colonnade?
—I see a train of guests in silence pour
Through its long avenues of terraced shade,
Whose stately founts and bowers for joy alone were made!

L.

In silence, and in arms !—With helm—with sword—
These are no marriage garments ! Yet e'en now
Thy nuptial feast should grace the regal board,
Thy Georgian bride should wreath her lovely brow
With an imperial diadem !—but thou,
O fated prince ! art called, and these with thee,
To darker scenes ; and thou hast learned to bow
Thine Eastern sceptre to the dread decree,
And count it joy enough to perish—being free !

LI.

On through long vestibules, with solemn tread
As men, that in some time of fear and woe,
Bear darkly to their rest the noble dead,
O'er whom by day their sorrows may not flow,
The warriors pass : their measured steps are slow,
And hollow echoes fill the marble halls,
Whose long-drawn vistas open as they go
In desolate pomp ; and from the pictured walls,
Sad seems the light itself which on their armor falls !

LII.

And they have reached a gorgeous chamber, bright
With all we dream of splendor ; yet a gloom
Seems gathered o'er it to the boding sight,
A shadow that anticipates the tomb !
Still from its fretted roof the lamps illume
A purple canopy, a golden throne ;
But it is empty !—hath the stroke of doom
Fallen there already ? Where is He, the One,
Born that high seat to fill, supremely and alone ?

LIII.

Oh ! there are times whose pressure doth efface
Earth's vain distinctions !—when the storm beats loud,
When the strong towers are tottering to their base,
And the streets rock,—who mingle in the crowd ?
—Peasant and chief, the lowly and the proud,
Are in that throng ! Yes, life hath many an hour
Which makes us kindred, by one chastening bowed,
And feeling but, as from the storm we cower,
What shrinking weakness feels before unbounded power !

LIV.

Yet then that Power, whose dwelling is on high,
Its loftiest marvels doth reveal, and speak,
In the deep human heart more gloriously,
Than in the bursting thunder !—Thence the weak,
They that seemed formed, as flower-stems, but to break
With the first wind, have risen to deeds, whose name
Still calls up thoughts that mantle to the cheek,

And thrill the pulse !—Ay, strength no pangs could tame
Hath looked from woman's eye upon the sword and flame.

LV.

And this of such hours !—That throne is void,
And its lord comes uncrowned. Behold him stand,
With a calm brow, where woes have not destroyed
The Greek's heroic beauty, 'midst his band,
The gathered virtue of a sinking land.
Alas ! how scanty !—Now is cast aside
All form of princely state ; each noble hand
Is pressed by turns in his : for earthly pride
There is no room in hearts where earthly hope hath died !

LVI.

A moment's hush—and then he speaks—he speaks !
But not of hope ! *that* dream hath long gone by :
His words are full of memory—as he seeks,
By the strong names of Rome and Liberty,
Which yet are living powers that fire the eye
And rouse the heart of manhood ; and by all
The sad yet grand remembrances that lie
Deep with earth's buried heroes ; to recall
The soul of other years, if but to grace their fall !

LVII.

His words are full of faith ! And thoughts, more high
Than Rome e'er knew, now fill his glance with light ;
Thoughts which gave nobler lessons how to die
Than e'er were drawn from Nature's haughty might !
And to that eye, with all the spirit bright,
Have theirs replied in tears, which may not shame
The bravest in such moments !—'Tis a sight
To make all earthly splendors cold and tame,
That generous burst of soul, with its electric flame !

LVIII.

They weep—those champions of the Cross—they weep,
Yet vow themselves to death ! Ay, 'midst that train
Are martyrs, privileged in tears to steep
Their lofty sacrifice ! The pang is vain,
And yet its gush of sorrow shall not stain
A warrior's sword. Those men are strangers here—
The homes they never may behold again,
Lie far away, with all things blest and dear,
On laughing shores, to which their barks no more shall steer !

LIX.

Knowest thou the land where bloom the orange bowers
Where, through dark foliage gleam the citron's dyes ?
—It is their own. They see their fathers' towers,
'Midst its Hesperian groves in sunlight rise :

They meet in soul, the bright Italian eyes,
Which long and vainly shall explore the main
For their white sails' return : the melodies
Of that sweet land are floating o'er their brain—
Oh ! what a crowded world one moment may contain !

LX.

Such moments come to thousands ! few may die
Amidst their native shades. The young, the brave,
The beautiful, whose gladdening voice and eye
Made summer in a parent's heart, and gave
Light to their peopled homes ; o'er land and wave
Are scattered fast and far, as rose-leaves fall
From the deserted stem. They find a grave
Far from the shadow of the ancestral hall,
A lonely bed is theirs, whose smiles were hope to all !

LXI.

But life flows on, and bears us with its tide,
Nor may we, lingering, by the slumberers dwell,
Though they were those once blooming at our side
In youth's gay home ! Away ! what sound's deep swell
Comes on the wind ?—It is an empire's knell,
Slow, sad, majestic, pealing through the night !
For the last time speaks forth the solemn bell,
Which calls the Christians to their holiest rite,
With a funeral voice of solitary might.

LXII.

Again, and yet again !—A startling power
In sounds like these lives ever ; for they bear,
Full on remembrance, each eventful hour,
Checkering life's crowded path. They fill the air
When conquerors pass, and fearful cities wear
A mien like joy's ; and when young brides are led
From their paternal homes ; and when the glare
Of burning streets on midnight's cloud waves red,
And when the silent house receives its guest—the dead.

LXIII.

But to those tones what thrilling soul was given,
On that last night of empire !—As a spell
Whereby the life-blood to its source is driven,
On the chilled heart of multitudes they fell.
Each cadence seemed a prophecy, to tell
Of sceptres passing from their line away,
An angel-watcher's long and sad farewell,
The requiem of a faith's departing sway,
A throne's, a nation's dirge, a wail for earth's decay.

LXIV.

Again, and yet again !—from yon high dome,
Still the slow peal comes awfully ; and they
Who never more, to rest in mortal home,
Shall throw the breastplate off at fall of day,
The imperial band, in close and armed array,
As men that from the sword must part no more,
Take through the midnight streets their silent way,
Within their ancient temple to adore,
Ere yet its thousand years of Christian pomp are o'er.

LXV.

It is the hour of sleep : yet few the eyes
O'er which forgetfulness her balm hath shed
In the beleaguered city. Stillness lies
With moonlight, o'er the hills and waters spread,
But not the less, with signs and sounds of dread,
The time speeds on. No voice is raised to greet
The last brave Constantine ; and yet the tread
Of many steps is in the echoing street,
And pressure of pale crowds, scarce conscious why they meet.

LXVI.

Their homes are luxury's yet : why pour they thence
With a dim terror in each restless eye ?
Hath the dread car which bears the pestilence,
In darkness, with its heavy wheels rolled by,
And rocked their palaces, as if on high
The whirlwind passed ?—From couch and joyous board
Hath the fierce phantom beckoned them to die ?
—No !—what are these ?—for them a cup is poured
More dark with wrath ;—*Man* comes—the spoiler and the sword.

LXVII.

Still, as the monarch and his chieftains pass
Through those pale throngs, the streaming torch-light throws
On some wild form, amidst the living mass,
Hues, deeply red like lava's, which disclose
What countless shapes are worn by mortal woes !
Lips bloodless, quivering limbs, hands clasped in prayer,
Starts, tremblings, hurryings, tears ; all outward shows
Betokening inward agonies, were there :
—Greeks ! Romans ! all but such as image brave despair !

LXVIII.

But high above that scene, in bright repose,
And beauty borrowing from the torches' gleams,
A mien of life, yet where no life-boat flows,
But all instinct with loftier being seems,
Pale, grand, colossal ; lo ! the embodied dreams

Of yore !—Gods, heroes, bards, in marble wrought,
Look down, as powers, upon the wild extremes
Of mortal passion !—Yet 'twas man that caught,
And in each glorious form enshrined immortal thought !

LXIX.

Stood ye not thus amidst the streets of Rome ?
That Rome which witnessed, in her sceptred days,
So much of noble death ?—When shrine and dome,
'Midst clouds of incense, rung with choral lays,
As the long triumph passed, with all its blaze
Of regal spoil, were ye not proudly borne,
O sovereign forms ? concentring all the rays
Of the soul's lightnings ?—did ye not adorn
The pomp which earth stood still to gaze on, and to mourn ?

LXX.

Hath it been thus ?—or did ye grace the halls,
Once peopled by the mighty ? Haply there,
In your still grandeur, from the pillared walls
Serene ye smiled on banquets of despair,
Where hopeless courage wrought itself to dare
The stroke of its deliverance, 'midst the glow
Of living wreaths, the sight of perfumed air,
The sound of lyres, the flower-crowned goblet's flow :
—Behold again !—high hearts made nobler offerings now !

LXXI.

The stately fane is reached—and at its gate
The warriors pause ; on life's tumultuous tide
A stillness falls, while he whom regal state
Hath marked from all, to be more sternly tried
By suffering, speaks :—each ruder voice hath died,
While his implores forgiveness !—"If there be
One 'midst your throngs, my people ! whom, in pride
Or passion, I have wronged ; such pardon, free
As mortals hope from heaven, accord that man to me !"

LXXII.

But all is silence ; and a gush of tears
Alone replies !—He hath not been of those
Who, feared by many, pine in secret fears
Of all ; the environed but by slaves and foes,
To whom day brings not safety, night repose,
For they have *heard the voice cry, "Sleep no more!"*
Of them he hath not been, nor such as close
Their hearts to misery, till the time is o'er,
When it speaks low and kneels the oppressor's throne before.

LXXIII.

He hath been loved—but who may trust the love
Of a degenerate race ?—in other mould

Are cast the free and lofty hearts, that prove
Their faith through fiery trials. Yet behold,
And call him not forsaken ;—thoughts untold
Have lent his aspect calmness, and his tread
Moves firmly to the shrine. What pomps unfold
Within its precincts !—Isles and seas have shed
Their gorgeous treasures there, around the imperial dead.

LXXIV.

'Tis a proud vision—that most regal pile
Of ancient days ! The lamps are streaming bright
From its rich altar, down each pillared aisle,
Whose vista fades in dimness ; but the sight
Is lost in splendors, as the wavering light
Develops, on those walls, the thousand dyes
Of the veined marbles, which array their height,
And from yon dome, the lode-star of all eyes,
Pour such an iris-glow as emulates the skies.

LXXV.

But gaze thou not on these ; though heaven's own hues,
In their soft clouds and radiant tracery vie ;
Though tints, of sun-born glory, may suffuse
Arch, column, rich mosaic : pass thou by
The stately tombs, where eastern Cæsars lie,
Beneath their trophies ; pause not here ; for know,
A deeper source of all sublimity
Lives in man's bosom, than the world can show,
In nature or in art—above, around, below.

LXXVI.

Turn thou to mark (though tears may dim thy gaze)
The steel-clad group before yon altar-stone ;
Heed not though gems and gold around it blaze ;
Those heads unhelmed, those kneeling forms alone,
Thus bowed, look glorious here. The light is thrown
Full from the shrine on one, a nation's lord,
A sufferer !—but his task shall soon be done—
E'en now, as Faith's mysterious cup is poured,
See to that noble brow, peace, not of earth, restored !

LXXVII.

The rite is o'er. The band of brethren part,
Once—and *but* once—to meet on earth again !
Each, in the strength of a collected heart,
To dare what man may dare—and know 'tis vain !
The rite is o'er . and thou, majestic fane !—
The glory is departed from thy brow !—
Be clothed with dust !—the Christian's farewell strain
Hath died within thy walls ; thy Cross must bow ,
Thy kingly tombs be spoiled ; thy golden shrines laid low !

LXXVIII.

The streets grow still and lonely—and the star,
The last bright lingerer in the path of morn,
Gleams faint ; and in the very lap of war,
As if young Hope with twilight's ray were born,
Awhile the city sleeps : her throngs, o'erworn
With fears and watchings, to their homes retire ;
Nor is the balmy air of dayspring torn
With battle-sounds ; the winds in sighs expire,
And quiet broods in mists that veil the sunbeam's fire.

LXXIX.

The city sleeps !—ay ! on the combat's eve,
And by the scaffold's brink, and 'midst the swell
Of angry seas, hath Nature won reprieve
Thus from her cares. The brave have slumbered well.
And e'en the fearful, in their dungeon-cell,
Chained between life and death !—Such rest be thine,
For conflicts wait thee still ! Yet who can tell
In that brief hour, how much of heaven may shine
Full on thy spirit's dream !—Sleep, weary Constantine.

LXXX.

Doth the blast rise !—the clouded east is red,
As if the storm were gathering ; and I hear
What seems like heavy rain-drops, or the tread,
The soft and smothered step, of those that fear
Surprise from ambushed foes. Hark ! yet more near
It comes, a many-toned and mingled sound ;
A rustling, as of winds, where boughs are sear,
A rolling, as of wheels that shake the ground
From far ; a heavy rush, like seas that burst their bound !

LXXXI.

Wake, wake ! They come from sea and shore, ascending
In hosts your ramparts ! Arm ye for the day !
Who now may sleep amidst the thunders rending,
Through tower and wall, a path for their array ?
Hark ! how the trumpet cheers them to the prey,
With its wild voice, to which the seas reply,
And the earth rocks beneath their engines' sway,
And the far hills repeat their battle-cry,
Till that fierce tumult seems to shake the vaulted sky !

LXXXII.

They fail not now, the generous band, that long
Have ranged their swords around a falling throne ;
Still in those fearless men the walls are strong,
Hearts, such as rescue empires, are their own !
—Shall those high energies be vainly shown !

No ! from their towers the invading tide is driven
Back, like the Red-sea waves, when God had blown
With His strong winds ! the dark-browed ranks are riven—
Shout, warriors of the cross !—for victory is of Heaven !

LXXXIII.

Stand firm !—Again the crescent host is rushing,
And the waves foam, as on the galleys sweep,
With all their fires and darts, though blood is gushing
Fast o'er their sides, as rivers to the deep.
Stand firm !—there yet is hope, the ascent is steep,
And from on high no shaft descends in vain ;
—But those that fall swell up the mangled heap,
In the red moat, the dying and the slain,
And o'er that fearful bridge the assailants mount again !

LXXXIV.

Oh ! the dread mingling, in that awful hour,
Of all terrific sounds !—the savage tone
Of the wild horn, the cannon's peal, the shower
Of hissing darts, the crash of walls o'erthrown,
The deep dull tambour's beat—man's voice alone
Is there unheard ! Ye may not catch the cry
Of trampled thousands—prayer, and shriek, and moan,
All drowned, as that fierce hurricane sweeps by,
But swell the unheeded sum earth pays for victory !

LXXXV.

War-clouds have wrapt the city—through their dun,
O'erloaded canopy, at times ablaze,
As of an angry storm-presaging sun,
From the Greek fire shoots up ; and lightning rays
Flash, from the shock of sabres, through the haze,
And glancing arrows cleave the dusky air !
—Ay ! *this* is in the compass of our gaze,—
But fearful things, unknown, untold, are there,
Workings of wrath and death, and anguish, and despair !

LXXXVI.

Woe, shame and woe !—A chief, a warrior flies,
A red-cross champion, bleeding, wild, and pale !
—O God ! that nature's passing agonies,
Thus, o'er the spark which dies not, should prevail.
Yes ! rend the arrow from thy shattered mail,
And stanch the blood-drops, Genoa's fallen son !
Fly swifter yet ! the javelins pour as hail !
—But there are tortures which thou canst not shun,
The spirit is *their* prey—thy pangs are but begun !

LXXXVII.

Oh, happy in their homes, the noble dead !
The seal is set on their majestic fame ;

Earth has drunk deep the generous blood they shed,
Fate has no power to dim their stainless name!
They may not, in one bitter moment, shame
Long glorious years; from many a lofty stem
Fall graceful flowers, and eagle hearts grow tame,
And stars drop, fading, from the diadem;
But the bright *past* is theirs—there is no change for *them!*

LXXXVIII.

Where art thou, Constantine?—where death is reaping
His sevenfold harvest!—where the stormy light,
Fast as the artillery's thunderbolts are sweeping,
Throws meteor-bursts o'er battles noonday-night
Where the towers rock and crumble from their height,
As to the earthquake, and the engines ply,
Like red Vesuvio; and where human might
Confronts all this, and still brave hearts beat high,
While scimitars ring loud on shivering panoply.

LXXXIX.

Where art thou, Constantine?—where Christian blood
Hath bathed the walls in torrents, and in vain!
Where faith and valor perish in the flood,
Whose billows, rising o'er their bosoms, gain
Dark strength each moment: where the gallant slain
Around the banner of the cross lie strewed,
Thick as the vine-leaves on the autumnal plain;
Where all, save one high spirit, is subdued,
And through the breach press on the o'erwhelming multitude.

XC.

Now is he battling 'midst a host alone,
As the last cedar stems awhile the sway
Of mountain storms, whose fury hath o'erthrown
Its forest-brethren in their green array!
And he hath cast his purple robe away,
With its imperial bearings; that his sword
An iron ransom from the chain may pay,
And win, what haply fate may yet accord,
A soldier's death—the all now left an empire's lord!

XCI.

Search for him now where bloodiest lie the files
Which once were men, the faithful and the brave?
Search for him now where loftiest rise the piles
Of shattered helms and shields, which could not save;
And crests and banners, never more to wave
In the free winds of heaven! He is of those
O'er whom the host may rush, the tempest rave,
And the steeds trample, and the spearmen close,
Yet wake them not!—so deep their long and last repose!

XCII.

Woe to the vanquished !—thus it hath been still
Since Time's first march !—Hark, hark, a people's cry!
Ay, now the conquerors in the streets fulfil
Their task of wrath ! In vain the victims fly ;
Hark ! now each piercing tone of agony
Blends in the city's shriek ! The lot is cast.
Slaves, 'twas your *choice* thus, rather thus, to die,
Than where the warrior's blood flows warm and fast,
And roused and mighty hearts beat proudly to the last!

XCIII.

Oh ! well doth freedom battle ! Men have made,
E'en midst their blazing roofs, a noble stand,
And on the floors, where once their children played,
And by the hearths, round which their household band
At evening met ; ay, struggling hand to hand,
Within the very chambers of their sleep,
There have they taught the spoilers of the land,
In chainless hearts what fiery strength lies deep,
To guard free homes !—but ye !—kneel, tremblers ! kneel and weep!

XCIV.

'Tis eve—the storm hath died, the valiant rest
Low on their shields ; the day's fierce work is done,
And bloodstained seas, and burning towers attest
Its fearful deeds. An empire's race is run !
Sad, 'midst his glory, looks the parting sun
Upon the captive city. Hark ! a swell
(Meet to proclaim barbaric war-fields won)
Of fierce triumphal sounds, that wildly tell
The Soldan comes within the Cæsars' halls to dwell!

XCV.

Yes ! with the peal of cymbal and of gong,
He comes,—the Moslem treads those ancient halls,
But all is stillness there, as death had long
Been lord alone within those gorgeous walls.
And half that silence of the grave appals
The conqueror's heart. Ay, thus with triumph's hour,
Still comes the boding whisper, which recalls
A thought of those impervious clouds that lower
O'er grandeur's path, a sense of some far mightier Power !

XCVI.

"The owl upon Afrasiab's towers hath sung
Her watch-song, and around the imperial throne,
The spider weaves his web !" Still darkly hung
That verse of omen, as a prophet's tone,
O'er his flushed spirit. Years on years have flown

To prove its truth · kings pile their domes in air
That the coiled snake may bask on sculptured stone,
And nations clear the forest, to prepare
For the wild fox and wolf more stately dwellings there!

XCVII.

But thou! that on thy ramparts proudly dying
As a crowned leader in such hours should die,
Upon thy pyre of shivered spears art lying,
With the heaven's o'er thee for a canopy,
And banners for thy shroud! No tear, no sigh,
Shall mingle with thy dirge; for thou art now
Beyond vicissitude! Lo! reared on high,
The Crescent blazes, while the Cross must bow:
But where no change can reach, there, Constantine, art thou!

XCVIII.

"After's life's fitful fever thou sleepest well!"
We may not mourn thee! Sceptred chiefs, from whom
The earth received her destiny, and fell
Before them trembling—to a sterner doom
Have oft been called. For them the dungeon's gloom,
With its cold starless midnight, hath been made
More fearful darkness, where, as in a tomb,
Without a tomb's repose, the chain hath weighed
Their very soul to dust, with each high power decayed.

XCIX.

Or in the eye of thousands they have stood,
To meet the stroke of death; but not like thee!
From bonds and scaffolds hath appealed *their* blood,
But thou didst fall unfettered, armed, and free,
And kingly to the last!—And if it be,
That, from the viewless world, whose marvels none
Return to tell, a spirit's eye can see
The things of earth; still mayest thou hail the sun,
Which o'er thy land shall dawn, when freedom's fight is won!

C.

And the hour comes, in storm! A light is glancing
Far through the forest-god's Arcadian shades!
—'Tis not the moonbeam, tremulously dancing,
Where lone Alpheus bathes his haunted glades;
A murmur, gathering power, the air, pervades,
Round dark Cithæron, and by Delphi's steep;
—'Tis not the song and lyre of Grecian maids,
Nor pastoral reed that lulls the vales to sleep,
Nor yet the rustling pines, nor yet the sounding deep!

CI.

Arms glitter on the mountains, which, of old,
Awoke to freedom's first heroic strain,

And by the streams, once crimson, as they rolled
The Persian helm and standard to the main ;
And the blue waves of Salamis again
Thrill to the trumpet ; and the tombs reply,
With their ten thousand echoes, from each plain,
Far as Platæa's, where the mighty lie,
Who crowned so proudly there the bowl of liberty!

CII.

Bright land, with glory mantled o'er by song!
Land of the vision-peopled hills and streams,
And fountains, whose deserted banks along,
Still the soft air with inspiration teems ;
Land of the graves, whose dwellers shall be themes
To verse forever ; and of ruined shrines,
That scarce look desolate beneath such beams,
As bathe in gold thine ancient rocks and pines ?
—When shall thy sons repose in peace beneath their vines!

CIII.

Thou wert not made for bonds, nor shame, nor fear!
—Do the hoar oaks and dark-green laurels wave
O'er Mantinea's earth ?—doth Pindus rear
His snows, the sunbeam, and the storm to brave ?
And is there yet on Marathon a grave ?
And doth Eurotas lead his silvery line
By Sparta's ruins ?—And shall man, a slave,
Bowed to the dust, amid such scenes repine ?
If e'er a soil was marked for freedom's step, 'tis thine!

CIV.

Wash from that soil the stains, with battle-showers!
—Beneath Sophia's dome the Moslem prays,
The crescent gleams amidst the olive-bowers,
In the Comneni's halls the Tartar sways :
But not for long !—the spirit of those days,
When the three hundred made their funeral pile
Of Asia's dead, is kindling, like the rays
Of thy rejoicing sun, when first his smile
Warms the Parnassian rock, and gilds the Delian isle.

CV.

If then 'tis given thee to arise in might,
Trampling the scourge, and dashing down the chain,
Pure be thy triumphs, as thy name is bright !
The cross of victory should not know a stain !
So may that faith once more supremely reign,
Through which we lift our spirits from the dust!
And deem not, e'en when virtue dies in vain,
She dies forsaken ; but repose our trust
On Him whose ways are dark, unsearchable—but just.

GREEK SONGS.

I.—THE STORM OF DELPHI.[1]

FAR through the Delphian shades
An eastern trumpet rung !
And the startled eagle rushed on high !
With a sounding flight through the fiery sky ;
And banners, o'er the shadowy glades,
To the sweeping winds were flung.

Banners, with deep-red gold
All waving as aflame,
And a fitful glance from the bright spear-head
On the dim wood-paths of the mountain shed,
And a peal of Asia's war-notes told
That in arms the Persian came.

He came with starry gems
On his quiver and his crest ;
With starry gems, at whose heart the day
Of the cloudless orient burning lay,
And they cast a gleam on the laurel-stems,
As onward his thousands pressed.

But a gloom fell o'er their way,
And a heavy moan went by !
A moan, yet not like the wind's low swell,
When its voice grows wild amidst cave and dell,
But a mortal murmur of dismay,
Or a warrior's dying sigh !

A gloom fell o'er their way !
'Twas not the shadow cast
By the dark pine-boughs, as they crossed the blue
Of the Grecian heavens with their solemn hue ;—
The air was filled with a mightier sway—
But on the spearmen passed !

And hollow to their tread,
Came the echoes of the ground,
And banners drooped, as with dews o'erborne,
And the wailing blast of the battle horn
Had an altered cadence, dull and dead,
Of strange foreboding sound.

[1] See the account cited from Herodotus, in Mitford's *Greece*.

But they blew a louder strain,
When the steep defiles were passed !
And afar the crowded Parnassus rose,
To shine through heaven with his radiant snows,
And in golden light in Delphian fane
Before them stood at last !

In golden light it stood,
'Midst the laurels gleaming lone,
For the sun-god yet, with a lovely smile,
O'er its graceful pillars looked awhile,
Though the stormy shade on cliff and wood
Grew deep round its mountain-throne.

And the Persians gave a shout !
But the marble-walls replied,
With a clash of steel and a sullen roar
Like heavy wheels on the ocean-shore,
And a savage trumpet's note pealed out,
Till their hearts for terror died !

On the armor of the god,
Then a viewless hand was laid ;
There were helm and spear, with a clanging din,
And corslet brought from the shrine within,
From the inmost shrine of the dread abode
And before its front arrayed.

And a sudden silence fell
Through the dim and loaded air !
On the wild bird's wing, and the myrtle spray,
And the very founts, in their silvery way,
With a weight of sleep came down the spell,
Till man grew breathless there.

But the pause was broken soon !
'Twas not by song or lyre ;
For the Delphian maids had left their bowers,
And the hearths were lone in the city's towers,
But there burst a sound through the misty noon-
That battle-noon of fire ?

It burst from earth and heaven !
It rolled from crag and cloud !
For a moment of the mountain-blast,
With a thousand stormy voices passed,
And the purple gloom of the sky was riven,
When the thunder pealed aloud.

And the lightnings in their play
Flashed forth, like javelins thrown ;
Like sun-darts winged from the silver bow,
They smote the spear and the turbaned brow,

And the bright gems flew from the crests like spray,
And the banners were struck down !

And the massy oak-boughs crashed
To the fire-bolts from on high,
And the forest lent its billowy roar,
While the glorious tempest onward bore,
And lit the streams, as they foamed and dashed,
With the fierce rain sweeping by.

Then rushed the Delphian men
On the pale and scattered host ;
Like the joyous burst of a flashing wave,
They rushed from the dim Corycian cave,
And the sighing blast o'er wood and glen
Rolled on, with the spears they tossed.

There were cries of wild dismay,
There were shouts of warrior glee,
There were savage sounds of the tempest's mirth,
That shook the realm of their eagle birth ;
But the mount of song, when they died away,
Still rose, with its temple, free !

And the Pæan swelled ere long,
Io Pæan ! from the fane ;
Io Pæan ! for the war array,
On the crowned Parnassus riven that day !
Thou shalt rise *as* free, thou mount of song !
With thy bounding streams again.

II.—THE BOWL OF LIBERTY.[1]

Before the fiery sun,
The sun that looks on Greece with cloudless eye,
In the free air, and on the war-field won,
Our fathers crowned the Bowl of Liberty.

Amidst the tombs they stood,
The tombs of heroes ! with the solemn skies,
And the wide plain around, where patriot blood
Had steeped the soil in hues of sacrifice.

They called the glorious dead,
In the strong faith which brings the viewless nigh,
And poured rich odors o'er their battle-bed,
And bade them to their rite of Liberty.

[1] This and the following piece appeared originally in the *New Monthly Magazine.*

They called them from the shades,
The golden-fruited shades, where minstrels tell
How softer light the immortal clime pervades,
And music floats o'er meads of Asphodel.

Then fast the bright red wine [1]
Flowed to *their* names who taught the world to die,
And made the land's green turf a living shrine,
Meet for the wreath and Bowl of Liberty.

So the rejoicing earth
Took from her vines again the blood she gave,
And richer flowers to deck the tomb drew birth
From the free soil thus hallowed to the brave.

We have the battle-fields,
The tombs, the names, the blue majestic sky,
We have the founts the purple vintage yields;
—When shall *we* crown the Bowl of Liberty?

III.—THE VOICE OF SCIO.

A voice from Scio's isle,—
A voice of song, a voice of old
Swept far as cloud or billow rolled,
And earth was hushed the while—

The souls of nations woke!
Where lies the land, whose hills among
That voice of victory hath not wrung,
As if a trumpet spoke?

To sky, and sea, and shore,
Of those whose blood, on Ilion's plain,
Swept from the rivers to the main,
A glorious tale it bore.

Still, by our sun-bright deep,
With all the fame that fiery lay
Threw round them, in its rushing way,
The sons of battle sleep.

And kings their turf have crowned!
And pilgrims o'er the foaming wave
Brought garlands there: so rest the brave,
Who thus their bard have found!

[1] For an account of this ceremony, anciently performed in commemoration of the battle of Platæa, see Potter's *Antiquities of Greece*, i. 389.

A voice from Scio's isle,
A voice as deep hath risen again
As far shall peal its thrilling strain,
Where'er our sun may smile!

Let not its tones expire!
Such power to waken earth and heaven,
And might and vengeance ne'er was given
To mortal song or lyre!

Know ye not whence it comes?
—From ruined hearths, from burning fanes,
From kindred blood on yon red plains,
From desolated homes!

'Tis with us through the night!
'Tis on our hills, 'tis in our sky—
Hear it, ye heavens! when swords flash high,
O'er the mid-waves of fight!

IV.—THE SPARTANS' MARCH.[1]

"The Spartans used not the trumpet in their march into battle," says Thucydides, "because they wished not to excite the rage of the warriors. Their charging-step was made to the 'Dorian mood of flutes and soft recorders.' The valor of a Spartan was too highly tempered to require a stunning or a rousing impulse. His spirit was like a steed too proud for the spur."—CAMPBELL *on the Elegiac Poetry of the Greeks.*

'Twas morn upon the Grecian hills,
Where peasants dressed the vines;
Sunlight was on Cithæron's rills,
Arcadia's rocks and pines.

And brightly, through his reeds and flowers,
Eurotas wandered by,
When a sound arose from Sparta's towers
Of solemn harmony.

Was it the hunters' choral strain
To the woodland-goddess poured?
Did virgin hands in Pallas' fane
Strike the full-sounding chord?

But helms were glancing on the stream,
Spears ranged in close array,
And shields flung back a glorious beam
To the morn of a fearful day!

[1] Originally published in the *Edinburgh Magazine.*

And the mountain-echoes of the land
Swelled through the deep blue sky ;
While to soft strains moved forth a band
Of men that moved to die.

They marched not with the trumpet's blast,
Nor bade the horn peal out,
And the laurel groves, as on they passed,
Rung with no battle shout !

They asked no clarion's voice to fire
Their souls with an impulse high ;
But the Dorian reed and the Spartan lyre
For the sons of liberty !

And still sweet flutes, their path around,
Sent forth Æolian breath ;
They needed not a sterner sound
To marshal them for death !

So moved they calmly to their field,
Thence never to return,
Save bearing back the Spartan shield,
Or on it proudly borne !

V.—THE URN AND SWORD.

They sought for treasures in the tomb,
Where gentler hands were wont to spread
Fresh boughs and flowers of purple bloom,
And sunny ringlets, for the dead.[1]

They scattered far the greensward heap,
Where once those hands the bright wine poured,
—What found they in the home of sleep ?—
A mouldering urn, a shivered sword !

An urn, which held the dust of one
Who died when hearths and shrines were free;
A sword, whose work was proudly done
Between our mountains and the sea.

And these are treasures !—undismayed,
Still for the suffering land we trust,
Wherein the past its fame hath laid,
With freedom's sword, and valor's dust.

[1] See Potter's *Grecian Antiquities*, ii. 234.

VI.—THE MYRTLE BOUGH.

Still green, along our sunny shore,
The flowering myrtle waves,
As when its fragrant boughs of yore
Were offered on the graves—
The graves, wherein our mighty men
Had rest, unviolated then.

Still green it waves! as when the hearth
Was sacred through the land;
And fearless was the banquet's mirth,
And free the minstrel's hand;
And guests, with shining myrtle crowned,
Sent the wreathed lyre and wine-cup round.

Still green, as when on holy ground
The tyrant's blood was poured:
Forget ye not what garlands bound
The young deliverer's sword!
Though earth may shroud Harmodious now,
We still have sword and myrtle bough!

ELYSIUM.

["In the Elysium of the ancients, we find none but heroes and persons, who had either been fortunate or distinguished on earth; the children, and apparently the slaves and lower classes, that is to say Poverty, Misfortune, and Innocence, were banished to the Infernal Regions."—Chateaubriand, *Génie du Christianisme*.]

Fair wert thou in the dreams
Of elder time, thou land of glorious flowers
And summer winds and low-toned silvery streams,
Dim with the shadows of thy laurel bowers,
Where, as they passed, bright hours
Left no faint sense of parting, such as clings
To earthly love, and joy in loveliest things!

Fair wert thou, with the light
On thy blue hills and sleepy waters cast,
From purple skies ne'er deepening into night,
Yet soft, as if each moment were their last
Of glory, fading fast
Along the mountains!—but *thy* golden day
Was not as those that warn us of decay.

And ever, through thy shades,
A swell of deep Æolian sound went by,
From fountain-voices in their secret glades,
And low reed-whispers, making sweet reply

To summer's breezy sigh,
And young leaves trembling to the wind's light breath,
Which ne'er had touched them with a hue of death!

And the transparent sky
Rung as a dome, all thrilling to the strain
Of harps that, 'midst the woods, made harmony
Solemn and sweet; yet troubling not the brain
With dreams and yearnings vain,
And dim remembrances, that still draw birth
From the bewildering music of the earth.

And who, with silent tread,
Moved o'er the plains of waving asphodel?
Called from the dim procession of the dead,
Who 'midst the shadowy amaranth-bowers might dwell,
And listen to the swell
Of those majestic hymn-notes, and inhale
The spirit wandering in the immortal gale?

They of the sword, whose praise,
With the bright wine at nations' feasts, went round!
They of the lyre, whose unforgotten lays
Forth on the winds had sent their mighty sound,
And in all regions found
Their echoes 'midst the mountains!—and become
In man's deep heart as voices of his home!

They of the daring thought!
Daring and powerful, yet to dust allied—
Whose flight through stars, and seas, and depths, had sought
The soul's far birth-place—but without a guide!
Sages and seers, who died,
And left the world their high mysterious dreams,
Born 'midst the olive woods, by Grecian streams.

But the most *loved* are they
Of whom fame speaks not with her clarion voice,
In regal halls!—the shades o'erhang their way,
The vale, with its deep fountains, is their choice,
And gentle hearts rejoice
Around their steps; till silently they die,
As a stream shrinks from summer's burning eye.

And these—of whose abode,
'Midst her green valleys, earth retained no trace,
Save a flower springing from their burial-sod,
A shade of sadness on some kindred face,
A dim and vacant place
In some sweet home;—thou hadst no wreaths for *these*,
Thou sunny land! with all thy deathless trees!

The peasant at his door
Might sing to die when vintage feasts were spread,

And songs on every wind ! From *thy* bright shore
No lovelier vision floated round his head—
Thou wert for nobler dead !
He heard the bounding steps which round him fell.
And sighed to bid the festal sun farewell !

The slave, whose very tears
Were a forbidden luxury, and whose breast
Kept the mute woes and burning thoughts of years,
As embers in a burial-urn compressed ;
He might not be thy guest !
No gentle breathings from thy distant sky
Came o'er *his* path, and whispered "Liberty !"

Calm, on its leaf-strewn bier,
Unlike a gift of Nature to Decay,
Too rose-like still, too beautiful, too dear,
The child at rest before the mother lay,
E'en so to pass away,
With its bright smile !—Elysium ! what wert *thou*
To her, who wept o'er that young slumberer's brow?

Thou hadst no home, green land !
For the fair creature from her bosom gone,
With life's fresh flowers just opening in its hand,
And all the lovely thoughts and dreams unknown
Which, in its clear eye, shone
Like spring's first wakening ! but that light was past—
Where went the dewdrop swept before the blast ?

Not where *thy* soft winds played,
Not where thy waters lay in glassy sleep !
Fade with thy bowers, thou Land of visions, fade !
From thee no voice came o'er the gloomy deep,
And bade man cease to weep !
Fade with the amaranth plain, the myrtle grove,
Which could not yield one hope to sorrowing love ![1]

[1] The form of this poem was a good deal altered by Mrs. Hemans some years after its first publication, and, though done so perhaps to advantage, one verse was omitted. As originally written, the two following stanzas concluded the piece :—

For the most loved are they
Of whom Fame speaks not with her clarion voice,
In regal halls ! the shades o'erhang their way.
The vale, with its deep fountains, is their choice,
And gentle hearts rejoice
Around their steps ; till silently they die,
As a stream shrinks from summer's burning eye.

And the world knows not then,
Not then, nor ever, what pure thoughts are fled !
Yet these are they, who on the souls of men
Come back, when night her folding veil hath spread,
The long-remembered dead !
But not with *thee* might aught save glory dwell—
Fade, fade away, thou shore of asphodel !

THE FUNERAL GENIUS;

AN ANCIENT STATUE.

"Debout, couronné de fleurs, les bras élevés et posés sur sa tête, et le dos appuyé contre un pin, ce génie semble exprimer par son attitude le repos des morts. Les bas-reliefs des tombeaux offrent souvent des figures semblables."—VISCONTI, *Description des Antiques du Musée Royal.*

THOU shouldst be looked on when the starlight falls
Through the blue stillness of the summer-air,
Not by the torch-fire wavering on the walls—
It hath too fitful and too wild a glare!
And thou!—thy rest, the soft, the lovely, seems
To ask light steps, that will not break its dreams.

Flowers are upon thy brow; for so the dead
Were crowned of old, with pale spring flowers like these:
Sleep on thine eye hath sunk; yet softly shed,
As from the wing of some faint southern breeze:
And the pine-boughs o'ershadow thee with gloom
Which of the grove seems breathing—not the tomb.

They feared not death, whose calm and gracious thought
Of the last hour, hath settled thus in thee!
They who thy wreath of pallid roses wrought,
And laid thy head against the forest tree,
As that of one, by music's dreamy close,
On the wood violets lulled to deep repose.

They feared not death!—yet who shall say his touch
Thus lightly falls on gentle things and fair?
Doth he bestow, or will he leave so much
Of tender beauty as thy features wear?
Thou sleeper of the bower! on whose young eyes
So still a night, a night of summer, lies!

Had they seen aught like thee?—Did some fair boy
Thus, with his graceful hair, before them rest?
—His graceful hair, no more to wave in joy,
But drooping, as with heavy dews oppressed:
And his eye veiled so softly by its fringe,
And his lip faded to the white-rose tinge?

Oh! happy, if to them the one dread hour
Made known its lessons from a brow like thine!
If all their knowledge of the spoiler's power
Came by a look so tranquilly divine!
—Let him, who *thus* hath seen the lovely part,
Hold well that image to his thoughtful heart!

But thou, fair slumberer ! was there less of woe,
Or love, or terror, in the days of old,
That men poured out their gladdening spirit's flow,
Like sunshine, on the desolate and cold,
And gave thy semblance to the shadowy king,
Who for deep souls had then a deeper sting ?

In the dark bosom of the earth they laid
Far more than we—for loftier faith is ours !
Their gems were lost in ashes—yet they made
The grave a place of beauty and of flowers,
With fragrant wreaths, and summer boughs arrayed,
And lovely sculpture gleaming through the shade.

Is it for *us* a darker gloom to shed
O'er its dim precincts ?—do we not intrust
But for a time, its chambers with our dead,
And strew immortal seed upon the dust ?
—Why should *we* dwell on that which lies beneath,
When living light hath touched the brow of death ?

THE TOMBS OF PLATÆA.

FROM A PAINTING BY WILLIAMS.

And there they sleep !—the men who stood
In arms before the exulting sun,
And bathed their spears in Persian blood,
And taught the earth how freedom might be won.

They sleep !—the Olympic wreaths are dead,
The Athenian lyres are hushed and gone ;
The Dorian voice of song is fled—
Slumber, ye mighty ! slumber deeply on.

They sleep, and seems not all around
As hallowed unto glory's tomb
Silence is on the battle ground,
The heavens are loaded with a breathless gloom.

And stars are watching on their height,
But dimly seen through mist and cloud,
And still and solemn is the light
Which folds the plain, as with a glimmering shroud.

And thou, pale night-queen ! here thy beams
Are not as those the shepherd loves,
Nor look they down on shining streams,
By Naiads haunted in their laurel groves :

Thou seest no pastoral hamlet sleep,
In shadowy quiet, 'midst its vines ;
No temple gleaming from the steep,
'Midst the gray olives, or the mountain pines :

But o'er a dim and boundless waste,
Thy rays, e'en like a tomb-lamp's, brood,
Where man's departed steps are traced
But by his dust, amidst the solitude.

And be it thus !—What slave shall tread
O'er freedom's ancient battle-plains !
Let deserts wrap the glorious dead,
When their bright land sits weeping o'er her chains :

Here, where the Persian clarion rung,
And where the Spartan sword flashed high,
And where the pæan strains were sung,
From year to year swelled on by liberty !

Here should no voice, no sound, be heard,
Until the bonds of Greece be riven,
Save of the leader's charging word,
Or the shrill trumpet, pealing up through heaven !

Rest in your silent homes, ye brave !
No vines festoon your lonely tree ![1]
No harvest o'er your war-field wave,
Till rushing winds proclaim—the land is free !

THE VIEW FROM CASTRI.

FROM A PAINTING BY WILLIAMS.

There have been bright and glorious pageants here,
Where now gray stones and moss-grown columns lie ;
There have been words, which earth grew pale to hear,
Breathed from the cavern's misty chambers nigh :
There have been voices, through the sunny sky,
And the pine-woods, their choral hymn-notes sending,
And reeds and lyres, their Dorian melody,
With incense-clouds around the temple blending,
And throngs with laurel-boughs, before the altar bending.

There have been treasures of the seas and isles
Brought to the day-god's now-forsaken throne ;
Thunders have pealed along the rock-defiles,
When the far-echoing battle-horn made known

[1] A single tree appears in Mr. Williams's impressive picture.

That foes were on their way !—the deep-wind's moan
Hath chilled the invader's heart with secret fear,
And from the Sybil-grottoes, wild and lone,
Storms have gone forth, which, in their fierce career,
From his bold hand have struck the banner and the spear.

The shrine hath sunk !—but thou unchanged art there!
Mount of the voice and vision, robed with dreams !
Unchanged, and rushing through the radiant air,
With thy dark waving pines, and flashing streams,
And all thy founts of song ! their bright course teems
With inspiration yet ; and each dim haze,
Or golden cloud which floats around thee, seems
As with its mantle veiling from our gaze
The mysteries of the past, the gods of elder days !

Away, vain phantasies !—doth less of power
Dwell round thy summit, or thy cliffs invest,
Though in deep stillness now, the ruin's flower
Wave o'er the pillars mouldering on thy breast !
—Lift through the free blue heavens thine arrowy crest !
Let the great rocks their solitude regain !
No Delphian lyres now break thy noontide rest
With their full chords :—but silent be the strain !
Thou hast a mightier voice to speak the Eternal's reign ![1]

THE FESTAL HOUR.

When are the lessons given
That shake the startled earth ? When wakes the foe
While the friend sleeps ? When falls the traitor's blow ?
When are proud sceptres riven,
High hopes o'erthrown ?—It is when lands rejoice,
When cities blaze and lift the exulting voice,
And wave their banners to the kindling heaven !

Fear ye the festal hour !
When mirth o'erflows, then tremble !—'Twas a night
Of gorgeous revel, wreaths, and dance, and light,
When through the regal bower
The trumpet pealed, ere yet the song was done,
And there were shrieks in golden Babylon,
And trampling armies, ruthless in their power.

The marble shrines were crowned :
Young voices, through the blue Athenian sky,
And Dorian reeds, made summer melody,

[1] This, with the preceding, and several of the following pieces, first appeared in the *Edinburgh Magazine*.

And censers waved around ;
And lyres were strung, and bright libations poured !
When, through the streets, flashed out the avenging sword,
Fearless and free, the sword with myrtles bound ![1]

Through Rome a triumph passed,
Rich in their sun-god's mantling beams went by
That long array of glorious pageantry,
With shout and trumpet-blast.
An empire's gems their starry splendor shed
O'er the proud march; a king in chains was led ;
A stately victor, crowned and robed, came last.[2]

And many a Dryad's bower
Had lent the laurels which, in waving play,
Stirred the warm air, and glistened round his way,
As a quick-flashing shower.
—O'er his own porch, meantime, the cypress hung,
Through his fair halls a cry of anguish rung—
Woe for the dead ! the father's broken flower.

A sound of lyre and song,
In the still night, went floating o'er the Nile,
Whose waves, and many an old mysterious pile,
Swept with that voice along ;
And lamps were shining o'er the red wine's foam
Where a chief revelled in a monarch's dome,
And fresh rose-garlands decked a glittering throng.

'Twas Antony that bade
The joyous chords ring out !—but strains arose
Of wilder omen at the banquet's close !
Sounds, by no mortal made,[3]
Shook Alexandria through her streets that night,
And passed—and with another sunset's light,
The kingly Roman on his bier was laid.

Bright 'midst its vineyards lay
The fair Campanian city,[4] with its towers
And temples gleaming through dark olive-bowers,
Clear in the golden day ;
Joy was around it as the glowing sky ;
And crowds had filled its halls of revelry,
And all the sunny air was music's way.

[1] The sword of Harmodius.
[2] Paulus Æmilius, one of whose sons died a few days before, and another shortly after, his triumph on the conquest of Macedon, when Perseus, king of that country, was led in chains.
[3] See the description given by Plutarch, in his life of Antony, of the supernatural sounds heard in the streets of Alexandria, the night before Antony's death.
[4] Herculaneum ; of which it is related that all the inhabitants were assembled in the theatres when the shower of ashes which covered the city descended.

A cloud came o'er the face
Of Italy's rich heaven !—its crystal blue
Was changed, and deepened to a wrathful hue
Of night, o'ershadowing space,
As with the wings of death !—in all his power
Vesuvius woke, and hurled the burning shower,
And who could tell the buried city's place ?

Such things have been of yore,
In the gay regions where the citrons blow,
And purple summers all their sleepy glow
On the grape clusters pour ;
And where the palms to spicy winds are waving,
Along clear seas of melting sapphire, laving,
As with a flow of light, their southern shore.

Turn we to other climes !—
Far in the Druid-Isle a feast was spread,
'Midst the rock-altars of the warrior dead :[1]
And ancient battle-rhymes
Were chanted to the harp ; and yellow mead
Went flowing round, and tales of martial deed,
And lofty songs of Britain's elder time ;

But, ere the giant-fane
Cast its broad shadows on the robe of even,
Hushed were the bards, and in the face of heaven,
O'er that old burial-plain
Flashed the keen Saxon dagger !—Blood was streaming
Where late the mead-cup to the sun was gleaming,
And Britain's hearths were heaped that night in vain—

For they returned no more !
They that went forth at morn, with reckless heart,
In that fierce banquet's mirth to bear their part ;
And, on the rushy floor,
And the bright spears and bucklers of the walls,
The high-wood fires were blazing in their halls ;
But not for them—they slept—their feast was o'er !

Fear ye the festal hour !
Ay, tremble when the cup of joy o'erflows !
Tame down the swelling heart !—the bridal rose,
And the rich myrtle's flower
Have veiled the sword !—Red wines have sparkled fast
From venomed goblets, and soft breezes passed,
With fatal perfume, through the revel's bower.

Twine the young glowing wreath !
But pour not all your spirit in the song,
Which through the sky's deep azure floats along,

[1] Stonehenge, said by some traditions to have been erected to the memory of Ambrosius, an early British king ; and by others mentioned as a monumental record of the massacre of British chiefs here alluded to.

Like summer's quickening breath !
The ground is hollow in the path of mirth :
Oh ! far too daring seems the joy of earth,
So darkly pressed and girdled in by death !

SONG OF THE BATTLE OF MORGARTEN.

["In the year 1315, Switzerland was invaded by Duke Leopold of Austria, with a formidable army. It is well attested that this prince repeatedly declared 'he would trample the audacious rustics under his feet ;' and that he had procured a large stock of cordage, for the purpose of binding their chiefs, and putting them to death.

"The 15th October, 1315, dawned. The sun darted its first rays on the shields and armor of the advancing host ; and this being the first army ever known to have attempted the frontiers of the cantons, the Swiss viewed its long line with various emotions. Montfort de Tettnang led the cavalry into the narrow pass, and soon filled the whole space between the mountain (Mount Sattel) and the lake. The fifty men on the eminence (above Morgarten) raised a sudden shout, and rolled down heaps of rocks and stones among the crowded ranks. The confederates on the mountain, perceiving the impression made by this attack, rushed down in close array, and fell upon the flank of the disordered column. With massy clubs they dashed in pieces the armor of the enemy, and dealt their blows and thrusts with long pikes. The narrowness of the defile admitted of no evolutions, and a slight frost having injured the road, the horses were impeded in all their motions ; many leaped into the lake ; all were startled ; and at last the whole column gave way, and fell suddenly back on the infantry ; and these last, as the nature of the country did not allow them to open their files, were run over by the fugitives, and many of them trampled to death. A general rout ensued, and Duke Leopold was, with much difficulty, rescued by a peasant, who led him to Winterthur, where the historian of the times saw him arrive in the evening, pale, sullen, and dismayed."—PLANTA'S *History of the Helvetic Confederacy.*]

THE wine-month[1] shone in its golden prime,
And the red grapes clustering hung.
But a deeper sound, through the Switzer's clime,
Than the vintage music, rung.
A sound, through vaulted caves,
A sound, through echoing glen,
Like the hollow swell of a rushing wave ;
—'Twas the tread of steel-girt men.

And a trumpet, pealing wild and far,
'Midst the ancient rocks was blown,
Till the Alps replied to that voice of war
With a thousand of their own.
And through the forest-glooms
Flashed helmets to the day,
And the winds were tossing knightly plumes,
Like the larch-boughs in their play.

In Hasli's[2] wilds there was gleaming steel,
As the host of the Austrian passed,
And the Schreckhorn's[3] rocks, with a savage peal,
Made mirth of his clarion's blast.
Up 'midst the Righi[4] snows
The stormy march was heard,

[1] *Wine-month*, the German name for October.
[2] Hasli, a wild district in the canton of Berne.
[3] Schreckhorn, the *peak of terror*, a mountain in the canton of Berne.
[4] Righi, a mountain in the canton of Schwytz.

With the charger's tramp, whence fire-sparks rose,
And the leader's gathering word.

But a band, the noblest band of all,
Through the rude Morgarten strait,
With blazoned streamers and lances tall,
Moved onwards in princely state.
They came with heavy chains,
For the race despised so long—
But amidst his Alp-domains,
The herdsman's arm is strong!

The sun was reddening the clouds of morn
When they entered the rock-defile,
And shrill as a joyous hunter's horn
Their bugles rung the while.
But on the misty height,
Where the mountain people stood,
There was stillness, as of night,
When storms at distance brood.

There was stillness, as of deep dead night,
And a pause—but not of fear,
While the Switzers gazed on the gathering might,
Of the hostile shield and spear.
On wound those columns bright
Between the lake and wood,
But they looked not to the misty height
Where the mountain people stood.

The pass was filled with their serried power,
All helmed and mail-arrayed,
And their steps had sounds like a thunder-shower
In the rustling forest-shade.
There were prince and crested knight,
Hemmed in by cliff and flood,
When a shout arose from the misty height
Where the mountain people stood.

And the mighty rocks came bounding down,
Their startled foes among,
With a joyous whirl from the summit thrown—
—Oh! the herdsman's arm is strong!
They came like lauwine[1] hurled
From Alp to Alp in play,
When the echoes shout through the snowy world,
And the pines are borne away.

The fire-woods crashed on the mountain-side,
And the Switzers rushed from high,
With a sudden charge, on the flower and pride
Of the Austrian chivalry:
Like hunters of the deer,
They stormed the narrow dell,
And first in the shock, with Uri's spear,
Was the arm of William Tell.[2]

There was tumult in the crowded strait,
And a cry of wild dismay,
And many a warrior met his fate
From a peasant's hand that day!
And the empire's banner then
From its place of waving free,
Went down before the shepherdmen,
The men of the Forest-sea.[3]

With their pikes and massy clubs they brake
The cuirass and the shield,
And the war-horse dashed to the reddening lake

[1] *Lauwine*, the Swiss name for the avalanche.
[2] William Tell's name is particularly mentioned amongst the confederates at Morgarten.
[3] *Forest-sea*, the lake of the four cantons is also so called.

From the reapers of the field !
The field—but not of sheaves—
Proud crests and pennons lay,
Strewn o'er it thick as the birch-wood leaves,
In the Autumn tempest's way.

Oh ! the sun in heaven fierce havoc viewed,
When the Austrian turned to fly,
And the brave, in the trampling multitude,
Had a fearful death to die !
And the leader of the war
At eve unhelmed was seen,
With a hurrying step on the wilds afar,
And a pale and troubled mien.

But the sons of the land which the freeman tills,
Went back from the battle-toil,
To their cabin homes 'midst the deep green hills,
All burdened with royal spoil.
There were songs and festal fires
On the soaring Alps that night,
When children sprung to greet their sires
From the wild Morgarten fight.

ON A FLOWER FROM THE FIELD OF GRÜTLI.

Whence art thou, flower? From holy ground,
Where freedom's foot hath been !
Yet bugle-blast or trumpet-sound
Ne'er shook that solemn scene.

Flower of a noble field ! thy birth
Was not where spears have crossed,
And shivered helms have strewn the earth,
'Midst banners won and lost.

But where the sunny hues and showers
Unto thy cup were given,
There met high hearts at midnight hours,
Pure hands were raised to heaven;

And vows were pledged that man should roam
Through every Alpine dell
Free as the wind, the torrent's foam,
The shaft of William Tell.

And prayer, the full deep flow of prayer,
Hallowed the pastoral sod ;
And souls grew strong for battle there,
Nerved with the peace of God.

Before the Alps and stars they knelt,
That calm devoted band,
And rose, and made their spirits felt
Through all the mountain land.

Then welcome Grütli's free-born flower !
Even in thy pale decay
There dwells a breath, a tone, a power,
Which all high thoughts obey.

ON A LEAF FROM THE TOMB OF VIRGIL.

And was thy home, pale withered thing,
Beneath the rich blue southern sky ?
Wert thou a nursling of the spring,
The winds and suns of glorious Italy ?

Those suns in golden light e'en now,
Look o'er the poet's lovely grave;
Those winds are breathing soft, but thou
Answering their whisper, there no more shalt wave.

The flowers o'er Posilippo's brow
May cluster in their purple bloom,
But on the o'ershadowing ilex-bough,
Thy breezy place is void by Virgil's tomb.

Thy place is void ; oh ! none on earth,
This crowded earth, may so remain,
Save that which souls of loftiest birth
Leave when they part, their brighter home to gain.

Another leaf, ere now, hath sprung
On the green stem which once was thine ;
When shall another strain be sung
Like his whose dust hath made that spot a shrine ?

THE CHIEFTAIN'S SON.

YES, it is ours !—the field is won,
A dark and evil field !
Lift from the ground my noble son,
And bear him homewards on his bloody shield.

Let me not hear your trumpets ring,
Swell not the battle-horn !
Thoughts far too sad those notes will bring,
When to the grave my glorious flower is borne !

Speak not of victory !—in the name
There is too much of woe !
Hushed be the empty voice of Fame—
Call me back *his* whose graceful head is low.

Speak not of victory !—from my halls
The sunny hour is gone !
The ancient banner on my walls,
Must sink ere long ; I had but him —but one !

Within the dwelling of my sires
The hearths will soon be cold,
With me must die the beacon-fires
That streamed at midnight from the mountain-hold.

And let them fade, since this must be,
My lovely and my brave !
Was thy bright blood poured forth for me ?
And is there but for stately youth a grave ?

Speak to me once again, my boy !
Wilt thou not hear my call !
Thou wert so full of life and joy,
I had not dreamt of *this*—that thou couldst fall !

Thy mother watches from the steep
For thy returning plume ;
How shall I tell her that thy sleep
Is of the silent house, the untimely tomb ?

Thou didst not seem as one to die,
With all thy young renown !
—Ye saw his falchion's flash on high,
In the mid-fight, when spears and crests went down !

Slow be your march ! the field is won !
A dark and evil field !
Lift from the ground my noble son,
And bear him homewards on his bloody shield.

A FRAGMENT.

REST on your battle-fields, ye brave !
Let the pines murmur o'er your grave,
Your dirge be in the moaning wave—
We call you back no more !

Oh ! there was mourning when ye fell,
In your own vales a deep-toned knell,
An agony, a wild farewell—
But that hath long been o'er.

Rest with your still and solemn
fame ;
The hills keep record of your name,
And never can a touch of shame
Darken the buried brow.

But we on changeful days are cast,
When bright names from their place
fall fast ;
And ye that with your glory passed,
We cannot mourn you now.

ENGLAND'S DEAD.

Son of the Ocean Isle !
Where sleep your mighty dead ?
Show me what high and stately pile
Is reared o'er Glory's bed.

Go, stranger ! track the deep—
Free, free the white sail spread !
Wave may not foam, nor wild wind
sweep,
Where rest not England's dead.

On Egypt's burning plains,
By the pyramid o'erswayed,
With fearful power the noonday
reigns,
And the palm trees yield no
shade ;—

But let the angry sun
From heaven look fiercely red,
Unfelt by those whose task is done !
There slumber England's dead.

The hurricane hath might
Along the Indian shore,
And far by Ganges' banks at night
Is heard the tiger's roar :—

But let the sound roll on,
It hath no tone of dread
For those that from their toils are
gone,—
There slumber England's dead.

Loud rush the torrent-floods
The Western wilds among,
And free, in green Columbia's
woods,
The hunter's bow is strung ;—

But let the floods rush on !
Let the arrow's flight be sped !
Why should *They* reck whose task is
done ?—
There slumber England's dead.

The mountain-storms rise high
In the snowy Pyrenees,
And tossed the pine-boughs through
the sky
Like rose-leaves on the
breeze ;—

But let the storm rage on !
Let the fresh wreaths be shed !
For the Roncesvalles' field is won,—
There slumber England's dead.

On the frozen deep's repose
'Tis a dark and dreadful hour,
When round the ship the ice-fields
close,
And the northern night-clouds
lower ;—

But let the ice drift on !
Let the cold-blue desert spread !
Their course with mast and flag is
done—
Even there sleep England's
dead.

The warlike of the isles,
The men of field and wave !
Are not the rocks their funeral piles,
The seas and shores their grave ?

Go, stranger ! track the deep—
Free, free the white sails
spread !
Wave may not foam, nor wild wind
sweep,
Where rest not England's dead.

THE MEETING OF THE BARDS.

WRITTEN FOR AN EISTEDDVOD, OR MEETING OF WELSH BARDS, HELD IN LONDON, MAY 22, 1822.

[The *Gorseddau*, or meetings of the British bards, were anciently ordained to be held in the open air, on some conspicuous situation, whilst the sun was above the horizon; or, according to the expression employed on these occasions, "in the face of the sun, and in the eye of light." The places set apart for this purpose were marked out by a circle of stones, called the circle of federation. The presiding bard stood on a large stone (Naen Gorsedd, or the stone of assembly) in the centre. The sheathing of a sword upon this stone was the ceremony which announced the opening of a *Gorsedd*, or meeting. The bards always stood in their uni-colored robes, with their heads and feet uncovered, within the circle of federation.—See OWEN'S *Translation of the Heroic Elegies of Llywarch Hen.*

WHERE met our bards of old?—the glorious throng,
They of the mountain and the battle song?
They met—oh! not in kingly hall or bower,
But where wild nature girt herself with power:
They met where streams flashed bright from rocky caves;
They met where woods made moan o'er warriors' graves,
And where the torrent's rainbow spray was cast,
And where dark lakes were heaving to the blast.
And midst the eternal cliffs, whose strength defied
The crested Roman, in his hour of pride;
And where the Carnedd,[1] on its lonely hill,
Bore silent record of the mighty still;
And where the Druid's ancient Cromlech[2] frowned
And the oaks breathed mysterious murmurs round.

There thronged the inspired of yore!—on plain or height,
In the sun's face, beneath the eye of light!
And, baring unto heaven each noble head,
Stood in the circle, where none else might tread.
Well might their lays be lofty!—soaring thought
From nature's presence tenfold grandeur caught.
Well might bold freedom's soul pervade the strains
Which startled eagles from their lone domains,
And, like a breeze in chainless triumph, went
Up through the blue resounding firmament.
Whence came the echoes to those numbers high?
'Twas from the battle-fields of days gone by,
And from the tombs of heroes, laid to rest
With their good swords, upon the mountain's breast;
And from the watch-towers on the heights of snow,
Severed by cloud and storm from all below;
And the turf-mounds,[3] once girt by ruddy spears,
And the rock-altars of departed years.

[1] Carnedd, a stone barrow, or cairn.
[2] Cromlech, a Druidical monument or altar. The word means a stone of covenant.
[3] The ancient British chiefs frequently harangued their followers from small artificial mounts of turf.—*Pennant.*

—Thence, deeply mingling with the torrent's roar,
The winds a thousand wild responses bore ;
And the green land, whose every vale and glen
Doth shrine the memory of heroic men,
On all her hills awakening to rejoice,
Sent forth proud answers to her children's voice.

For us, not ours the festival to hold,
Midst the stone circles, hallowed thus of old ;
Not where great Nature's majesty and might
First broke all-glorious on our infant sight ;
Not near the tombs, where sleep our free and brave,
Not by the mountain-llyn,[1] the ocean-wave,
In these late days we meet—dark Mona's shore,
Eryri's[2] cliffs resound with harps no more !

But as the stream (though time or art may turn
The current, bursting from its caverned urn,
From Alpine glens, or ancient forest bowers,
To bathe soft vales of pasture and of flowers),
Alike in rushing strength or sunny sleep,
Holds on its course, to mingle with the deep ;
Thus, though our paths be changed, still warm and free,
Land of the bard ! our spirit flies to thee !
To thee our thoughts, our hopes, our hearts belong,
Our dreams are haunted by the voice of song !
Nor yield our souls one patriot-feeling less
To the green memory of thy loveliness,
Than theirs, whose harp-notes pealed from every height,
In the sun's face, beneath the eye of light !

THE VOICE OF SPRING.[3]

I COME, I come ! ye have called me long—
I come o'er the mountains with light and song !
Ye may trace my step o'er the wakening earth,
By the winds which tell of the violet's birth,
By the primrose-stars in the shadowy grass,
By the green leaves opening as I pass.

I have breathed on the South, and the chestnut flowers
By thousands have burst from the forest-bowers,
And the ancient graves and the fallen fanes
Are veiled with wreaths on Italian plains ;—
But it is not for me, in my hour of bloom.
To speak of the ruin or the tomb !

[1] Llyn, a lake or pool.
[2] *Eryri*, Snowdon.
[3] Originally published in the *New Monthly Magazine.*

I have looked on the hills of the stormy North,
And the larch has hung all his tassels forth,
The ısher is out on the sunny sea,
And the reindeer bounds o'er the pastures free,
And the pine has a fringe of softer green,
And the moss looks bright where my foot hath been.

I have sent through the wood-paths a growing sigh,
And called out each voice of the deep-blue sky ;
From the night-bird's lay through the starry time,
In the groves of the soft Hesperian clime,
To the swan's wild note by the Iceland lakes,
When the dark fir-branch into verdure breaks.

From the streams and founts I have loosed the chain,
They are sweeping on to the silvery main,
They are flashing down from the mountain brows,
They are flinging spray o'er the forest boughs,
They are bursting fresh from their sparry caves,
And the earth resounds with the joy of waves !

Come forth, O ye children of gladness ! come !
Where the violets lie may be now your home.
Ye of the rose-lip and dew-bright eye,
And the bounding footstep to meet me fly !
With the lyre, and the wreath, and the joyous lay,
Come forth to the sunshine—I may not stay.

Away from the dwellings of care-worn men,
The waters are sparkling in grove and glen !
Away from the chamber and sullen hearth,
The young leaves are dancing in breezy mirth !
Their light stems thrill to the wild-wood strains,
And youth is abroad in my green domains.

But ye !—ye are changed since ye met me last !
There is something bright from your features passed !
There is that come over your brow and eye
Which speaks of a world where the flowers must die !
—Ye smile ! but your smile hath a dimness yet ;
Oh ! what have you looked on since last we met ?

Ye are changed, ye are changed !—and I see not here
All whom I saw in the vanished year !
There were graceful heads, with their ringlets bright,
Which tossed in the breeze with a play of light ;
There were eyes in whose glistening laughter lay
No faint remembrance of dull decay !

There were steps that flew o'er the cowslip's head,
As if for a banquet all earth were spread ;
There were voices that rang through the sapphire sky,
And had not a sound of mortality !
Are they gone ? is their mirth from the mountains passed ?—
Ye have looked on death since ye met me last !

I know whence the shadow comes o'er you now—
Ye have strewn the dust on the sunny brow!
Ye have given the lovely to earth's embrace—
She hath taken the fairest of beauty's race,
With their laughing eyes and their festal crown:
They are gone from amongst you in silence down!

They are gone from amongst you, the young and fair,
Ye have lost the gleam of their shining hair!
But I know of a land where there falls no blight—
I shall find them there, with their eyes of light!
Where Death midst the blooms of the morn may dwell,
I tarry no longer—farewell, farewell!

The summer is coming, on soft winds borne—
Ye may press the grape, ye may bind the corn!
For me, I depart to a brighter shore—
Ye are marked by care, ye are mine no more;
I go where the loved who have left you dwell,
And the flowers are not Death's—fare ye well, farewell!

MISCELLANEOUS.

LINES

WRITTEN IN A HERMITAGE ON THE SEASHORE.

O WANDERER! would thy heart forget
Each earthly passion and regret,
And would thy wearied spirit rise
To commune with its native skies;
Pause for a while, and deem it sweet
To linger in this calm retreat;
And give thy cares, thy griefs, a short suspense,
Amidst wild scenes of lone magnificence.

Unmixed with aught of meaner tone,
Here nature's voice is heard alone:
When the loud storm, in wrathful hour,
Is rushing on its wing of power,
And spirits of the deep awake,
And surges foam, and billows break,
And rocks and ocean-caves around
Reverberate each awful sound;
That mighty voice, with all its dread control,
To loftiest thought shall wake thy thrilling soul.

But when no more the sea-winds rave,
When peace is brooding on the wave,
And from earth, air, and ocean rise
No sounds but plaintive melodies;
Soothed by their softly mingling swell,
As daylight bids the world farewell,
The rustling wood, the dying breeze,
The faint, low rippling of the seas,
A tender calm shall steal upon thy breast,
A gleam reflected from the realms of rest.

Is thine a heart the world hath stung,
Friends have deceived, neglect hath wrung ?
Hast thou some grief that none may know,
Some lonely, secret, silent woe ?
Or have thy fond affections fled
From earth, to slumber with the dead ?—
Oh ! pause awhile—the world disown,
And dwell with nature's self alone !
And though no more she bids arise
Thy soul's departed energies,
And though thy joy of life is o'er,
Beyond her magic to restore ;
Yet shall her spells o'er every passion steal,
And soothe the wounded heart they cannot heal.

DIRGE OF A CHILD.

No bitter tears for thee be shed,
Blossom of being ! seen and gone !
With flowers alone we strew thy bed,
O blest departed One !
Whose all of life, a rosy ray,
Blushed into dawn and passed away.

Yes ! thou art fled, ere guilt had power
To stain thy cherub-soul and form,
Closed is the soft ephemeral flower
That never felt a storm !
The sunbeam's smile, the zephyr's breath,
All that it knew from birth to death.

Thou wert so like a form of light,
That heaven benignly called thee hence,
Ere yet the world could breathe one blight
O'er thy sweet innocence :
And thou, that brighter home to bless,
Art passed, with all thy loveliness !

Oh ! hadst thou still on earth remained,
Vision of beauty ! fair, as brief !
How soon thy brightness had been stained
With passion or with grief !
Now not a sullying breath can rise,
To dim thy glory in the skies.

We rear no marble o'er thy tomb ;
No sculptured image there shall mourn ;
Ah ! fitter far the vernal bloom
Such dwelling to adorn.
Fragrance, and flowers, and dews, must be
The only emblems meet for thee.

Thy grave shall be a blessed shrine,
Adorned with Nature's brightest wreath ;
Each glowing season shall combine
Its incense there to breathe ;
And oft, upon the midnight air,
Shall viewless harps be murmuring there.

And oh ! sometimes in visions blest,
Sweet spirit ! visit our repose ;
And bear, from thine own world of rest,
Some balm for human woes !
What form more lovely could be given
Than thine to messenger of heaven ?

INVOCATION.

Hushed is the world in night and sleep,
Earth, Sea, and Air, are still as death ;
Too rude to break a calm so deep,
Were music's faintest breath.
Descend, bright visions ! from aërial bowers,
Descend to gild your own soft, silent hours.

In hope or fear, in toil or pain,
The weary day have mortals past ;

Now, dreams of bliss ! be yours to reign,
And all your spells around them cast,
Steal from their hearts the pang, their eyes the tear,
And lift the veil that hides a brighter sphere.

Oh ! bear your softest balm to those
Who fondly, vainly, mourn the dead,
To them that world of peace disclose,
Where the bright soul is fled :
Where Love, immortal in his native clime,
Shall fear no pang from fate, no blight from time.

Or to his loved, his distant land,
On your light wings the exile bear
To feel once more his heart expand,
In his own genial mountain-air ;
Hear the wild echoes' well-known strains repeat,
And bless each note, as Heaven's own music sweet.

But oh ! with Fancy's brightest ray,
Blest dreams ! the bard's repose illume ;
Bid forms of heaven around him play,
And bowers of Eden bloom !
And waft *his* spirit to its native skies
Who finds no charm in life's realities.

No voice is on the air of night,
Through folded leaves no murmur creep,
Nor star nor moonbeam's trembling light
Falls on the placid brow of sleep.
Descend, bright visions ! from your airy bower :
Dark, silent, solemn, is your favorite hour.

TO THE MEMORY OF

GENERAL SIR EDWARD PAKENHAM.

Brave spirit ! mourned with fond regret,
Lost in life's pride, in valor's noon,
Oh ! who could deem *thy* star should set
So darkly and so soon !

Fatal, though bright, the fire of mind
Which marked and closed thy brief career ;
And the fair wreath, by Hope entwined,
Lies withered on thy bier.

The soldier's death hath been thy doom,
The soldier's tear thy meed shall be ;
Yet, son of war ! a prouder tomb
Might Fate have reared for thee.

Thou shouldst have died, O high-souled chief !
In those bright days of glory fled,
When triumph so prevailed o'er grief,
We scarce could mourn the dead.

Noontide of fame ! each tear-drop then
Was worthy of a warrior's grave :
When shall affection weep again
So proudly o'er the brave ?

There, on the battle-fields of Spain,
'Midst Roncesvalles' mountain-scene,
Or on Vittoria's blood-red plain,
Meet had thy deathbed been.

We mourn not that a hero's life
Thus in its ardent prime should close ;
Hadst thou but fallen in nobler strife,
But died 'midst conquered foes !

Yet hast thou still (though victory's flame
In that last moment cheered thee not)
Left Glory's isle another name,
That ne'er may be forgot :

And many a tale of triumph won,
Shall breathe that name in Memory's ear,
And long may England mourn a son
Without reproach or fear.

TO THE MEMORY OF

SIR HENRY ELLIS,

WHO FELL IN THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO.

"Happy are they who die in youth, when their renown is around them."
—OSSIAN.

WEEPST thou for him, whose doom was sealed
On England's proudest battle-field ?
For him, the lion-heart, who died
In victory's full resistless tide !
Oh, mourn him not !
By deeds like his that field was won,
And Fate could yield to Valor's son
No brighter lot.

He heard his band's exulting cry,
He saw the vanquished eagles fly ;
And envied be his death of fame,
It shed a sunbeam o'er his name
That naught shall dim :
No cloud obscured his glory's day,
It saw no twilight of decay—
Weep not for him !

And breathe no dirge's plaintive moan,
A hero claims far loftier tone !
Oh ! proudly should the war-song swell,
Recording how the mighty fell
In that dread hour,
When England, 'midst the battle-storm—
The avenging angel—reared her form
In tenfold power.

Yet, gallant heart ! to swell thy praise
Vain were the minstrel's noblest lays ;
Since he, the soldier's guiding-star,
The Victor-chief, the lord of war,
Has owned thy fame :
And oh ! like *his* approving word,
What trophied marble could record
A warrior's name ?

GUERILLA SONG.

FOUNDED ON THE STORY RELATED OF THE SPANISH PATRIOT MINA.

OH ! forget not the hour, when through forest and vale,
We returned with our chief to his dear native halls ;
Through the woody Sierra there sighed not a gale,
And the moonbeam was bright on his battlement-walls ;
And nature lay sleeping in calmness and light,
Round the home of the valiant, that rose on our sight.

We entered that home—all was loneliness round,
The stillness, the darkness, the peace of the grave ;
Not a voice, not a step, bade its echoes resound,
Ah ! such was the welcome that waited the brave !

For the spoilers had passed, like the poison-wind's breath,
And the loved of his bosom lay silent in death.

Oh ! forget not that hour—let its image be near,
In the light of our mirth, in the dreams of our rest,
Let its tale awake feelings too deep for a tear,
And rouse into vengeance each arm and each breast,
Till cloudless the dayspring of liberty shine
O'er the plains of the olive, and hills of the vine.

THE AGED INDIAN.

Warriors ! my noon of life is past,
The brightness of my spirit flown ;
I crouch before the wintry blast,
Amidst my tribe I dwell alone ;
The heroes of my youth are fled,
They rest among the warlike dead.

Ye slumbers of the narrow cave !
My kindred-chiefs in days of yore,
Ye fill an unremembered grave,
Your fame, your deeds, are known no more,
The records of your wars are gone,
Your names forgot by all but one.

Soon shall that one depart from earth,
To join the brethren of his prime ;
Then will the memory of your birth
Sleep with the hidden things of time,
With him, ye sons of former days !
Fades the last glimmering of your praise.

His eyes, that hailed your spirits' flame,
Still kindling in the combat's shock,
Have seen, since darkness veiled your fame,
Sons of the desert and the rock !
Another and another race,
Rise to the battle and the chase.

Descendants of the mighty dead !
Fearless of heart, and firm of hand !
O ! let me join their spirits fled,
O ! send me to their shadowy land.
Age hath not tamed Ontara's heart,
He shrinks not from the friendly dart.

These feet no more can chase the deer,
The glory of his arm is flown ;—
Why should the feeble linger here,
When all the pride of life is gone ?
Warriors ! why still the stroke deny,
Think ye Ontara fears to die ?

He feared not in his flower of days,
When strong to stem the torrent's force,
When through the desert's pathless maze,
His way was an eagle's course !
When war was sunshine to his sight,
And the wild hurricane, delight ?

Shall then the warrior tremble *now ?*
Now when his envied strength is o'er?
Hung on the pine his idle bow,
His pirogue useless on the shore ?
When age hath dimmed his failing eye,
Shall he, the joyless, fear to die ?

Sons of the brave ! delay no more,
The spirits of my kindred call ;
'Tis but one pang, and all is o'er !
Oh ! bid the aged cedar fall !
To join the brethren of his prime,
The mighty of departed time.

EVENING AMONGST THE ALPS.

Sort skies of Italy ! how richly drest,
Smile these wild scenes in your purpureal glow !
What glorious hues, reflected from the west,
Float o'er the dwellings of eternal snow !

Yon torrent, foaming down the granite steep,
Sparkles all brilliance in the setting beam ;
Dark glens beneath in shadowy beauty sleep,
Where pipes the goatherd by his mountain-stream.

Now from yon peak departs the vivid ray,
That still at eve its lofty temple knows ;
From rock and torrent fade the tints away,
And all is wrapt in the twilight's deep repose :
While through the pine-wood gleams the vesper star,
And roves the Alpine gale o'er solitudes afar.

DIRGE OF THE HIGHLAND CHIEF IN "WAVERLEY."

Son of the mighty and the free !
High-minded leader of the brave !
Was it for lofty chief like thee,
To fill a nameless grave !
Oh ! if amidst the valiant slain,
The warrior's bier had been thy lot,
E'en though on red Culloden's plain,
We then had mourned thee not.

But darkly closed thy dawn of fame,
That dawn whose sunbeam rose so fair ;
Vengeance alone may breathe thy name,
The watchword of Despair !
Yet oh ! if gallant spirit's power
Hath e'er ennobled death like thine,
Then glory marked *thy* parting hour,
Last of a mighty line !

O'er thy own towers the sunshine falls,
But cannot chase their silent gloom ;
Those beams that gild thy native walls
Are sleeping on thy tomb !

Spring on thy mountains laughs the while,
Thy green woods wave in vernal air,
But the loved scenes may vainly smile.
Not e'en thy dust is there.

On thy blue hills no bugle-sound
Is mingling with the torrent's roar,
Unmarked, the wild deer sport around ;
Thou leadst the chase no more !
Thy gates are closed, thy halls are still,
Those halls where pealed the choral strain ;
They hear the wind's deep murmuring thrill,
And all is hushed again.

No banner from the lonely tower
Shall wave its blazoned folds on high ;
There the tall grass, and summer flower,
Unmarked shall spring and die.

No more thy bard, for other ear,
Shall wake the harp once loved by thine—
Hushed be the strain *thou* canst not hear,
Last of a mighty line!

THE CRUSADERS' WAR-SONG.

CHIEFTAINS, lead on! our hearts beat high,
Lead on to Salem's towers!
Who would not deem it bliss to die,
Slain in a cause like ours?
The brave who sleep in soil of thine,
Die not entombed but shrined, O Palestine!

Souls of the slain in holy war!
Look from your sainted rest.
Tell us ye rose in Glory's car,
To mingle with the blest;
Tell us how short the death pang's power,
How bright the joys of your immortal bower.

Strike the loud harp, ye minstrel train
Pour forth your loftiest lays;
Each heart shall echo to the strain
Breathed in the warrior's praise.
Bid every string triumphant swell
The inspiring sounds that heroes love so well.

Salem! amidst the fiercest hour,
The wildest rage of fight,
Thy name shall lend our falchions power,
And nerve our hearts with might.
Envied be those for thee that fall,
Who find their graves beneath thy sacred wall.

For them no need that sculptured tomb
Should chronicle their fame,
Or pyramid record their doom,
Or deathless verse their name;
It is enough that dust of thine
Should shroud their forms, O blessed Palestine!

Chieftains, lead on! our hearts beat high
For combat's glorious hour;
Soon shall the red-cross banner fly
On Salem's loftiest tower!
We burn to mingle in the strife,
Where *but* to die ensures eternal life.

THE DEATH OF CLANRONALD.

It was in the battle of Sheriffmoor that young Clanronald fell, leading on the Highlanders of the right wing. His death dispirited the assailants, who began to waver. But Glengary, chief of a rival branch of the clan Colla, started from the ranks, and, waving his bonnet round his head, cried out, "To-day for revenge, and to-morrow for mourning!" The Highlanders received a new impulse from his words, and, charging with redoubled fury, bore down all before them.—See the *Quarterly Review* article of "Culloden Papers."

OH! ne'er be Clanronald the valiant forgot!
Still fearless and first in the combat, he fell;
But we paused not one tear-drop to shed o'er the spot,
We spared not one moment to murmur "Farewell."
We heard but the battle-word given by the chief,
"To-day for revenge, and to-morrow for grief!"

And wildly, Clanronald ! we echoed the vow,
With the tear on our cheek, and the sword in our hand ;
Young son of the brave ! we may weep for thee now,
For well has thy death been avenged by thy band,
When they joined, in wild chorus, the cry of the chief,
" To-day for revenge, and to-morrow for grief ! "

Thy dirge in that hour was the bugle's wild call,
The clash of the claymore, the shout of the brave ;
But now thy own bard may lament for thy fall,
And the soft voice of melody sigh o'er thy grave—
While Albyn remembers the words of the chief,
" To-day for revenge, and to-morrow for grief ! "

Thou art fallen, O fearless one ! flower of thy race :
Descendant of heroes ! thy glory is set :
But thy kindred, the sons of the battle and chase,
Have proved that thy spirit is bright in them yet !
Nor vainly have echoed the words of the chief,
" To-day for revenge, and to-morrow for grief ! "

TO THE EYE.

THRONE of expression ! whence the spirit's ray
Pours forth so oft the light of mental day,
Where fancy's fire, affection's melting beam,
Thought, genius, passion, reign in turn supreme,
And many a feeling, words can ne'er impart,
Finds it own language to pervade the heart ;
Thy power, bright orb, what bosom hath not felt,
To thrill, to rouse, to fascinate, to melt !
And by some spell of undefined control,
With magnet-influence touch the secret soul !

Light of the features ! in the morn of youth
Thy glance is nature, and thy language truth ;
And ere the world, with all-corrupting sway,
Hath taught e'en *thee* to flatter and betray,
The ingenuous heart forbids thee to reveal,
Or speak one thought that interest would conceal ;
While yet thou seemest the cloudless mirror, given
But to reflect the purity of heaven ;
O ! then how lovely, there unveiled, to trace
The unsullied brightness of each mental grace !

When Genius lends thee all his living light
Where the full beams of intellect unite ;
When love illumines thee with his varying ray,
Where trembling Hope and tearful Rapture play ;
Or Pity's melting cloud thy beam subdues,
Tempering its lustre with a veil of dews ;

Still does thy power, whose all-commanding spell
Can pierce the mazes of the soul so well,
Bid some new feeling to existence start,
From its deep slumbers in the inmost heart.

And O ! when thought, in ecstasy sublime,
That soars triumphant o'er the bounds of time,
Fires thy keen glance with inspiration's blaze,
The light of heaven, the hope of nobler days,
(As glorious dreams, for utterance far too high,
Flash through the mist of dim mortality ;)
Who does not own, that through the lightning-beams
A flame unquenchable, unearthly, streams ?
That pure, though captive effluence of the sky,
The vestal ray, the spark that cannot die !

THE HERO'S DEATH.

Life's parting beams were in his eye,
Life's closing accents on his tongue,
When round him, pealing to the sky,
The shout of victory rung !

Then, ere his gallant spirit fled,
A smile so bright illumed his face—
Oh ! never, of the light it shed,
Shall memory lose a trace !

His was a death, whose rapture high
Transcended all that life could yield ;
His warmest prayer was so to die,
On the red battle-field !

And they may feel, who loved him most,
A pride so holy and so pure :
Fate hath no power o'er those who boast
A treasure thus secure !

THE TREASURES OF THE DEEP.[1]

What hidest thou in thy treasure caves and cells,
Thou hollow-sounding and mysterious main ?—
Pale glistening pearls, and rainbow-colored shells,
Bright things which gleam unrecked of, and in vain
Keep, keep thy riches, melancholy sea !
We ask not such from thee.

[1] Originally introduced in the "Forest Sanctuary."

Yet more, the depths have more! What wealth untold,
Far down, and shining through their stillness lies.
Thou hast the starry gems, the burning gold,
Won from ten thousand royal Argosies.—
Sweep o'er thy spoils, thou wild and wrathful main!
Earth claims not *these* again.

Yet more, the depths have more! Thy waves have rolled
Above the cities of a world gone by!
Sand hath filled up the palaces of old,
Sea-weed o'ergrown the halls of revelry.—
Dash o'er them, ocean! in thy scornful play:
Man yields them to decay.

Yet more! the billows and the depths have more!
High hearts and brave are gathered to thy breast!
They hear not now the booming waters roar,
The battle-thunders will not break their rest.—
Keep thy red gold and gems, thou stormy grave!
Give back the true and brave!

Give back the lost and lovely!—those for whom
The place was kept at board and hearth so long,
The prayer went up through midnight's breathless gloom,
And the vain yearning woke midst festal song!
Hold fast thy buried isles, thy towers o'erthrown—
But all is not thine own.

To thee the love of woman hath gone down,
Dark flow thy tides o'er manhood's noble head,
O'er youth's bright locks, and beauty's flowery crown;
Yet must thou hear a voice—Restore the dead!
Earth shall reclaim her precious things from thee!—
Restore the dead, thou sea!

BRING FLOWERS.

Bring flowers, young flowers, for the festal board,
To wreath the cup ere the wine is poured!
Bring flowers! they are springing in wood and vale:
Their breath floats out on the southern gale,
And the touch of the sunbeam hath waked the rose,
To deck the hall where the bright wine flows.

Bring flowers to strew in the conqueror's path!
He hath shaken thrones with his stormy wrath:
He comes with the spoils of nations back,
The vines lie crushed in his chariot's track,
The turf looks red where he won the day,
Bring flowers to die in the conqueror's way!

Bring flowers to the captive's lonely cell !
They have tales of the joyous woods to tell—
Of the free blue streams, and the glowing sky,
And the bright world shut from his languid eye ;
They will bear him a thought of the sunny hours,
And the dream of his youth. Bring him flowers, wild flowers !

Bring flowers, fresh flowers, for the bride to wear !
They were born to blush in her shining hair
She is leaving the home of her childhood's mirth,
She hath bid farewell to her father's hearth,
Her place is now by another's side.
Bring flowers for the locks of the fair young bride !

Bring flowers, pale flowers, o'er the bier to shed,
A crown for the brow of the early dead !
For this through its leaves hath the white rose burst,
For this in the woods was the violet nursed !
Though they smile in vain for what once was ours,
They are love's last gift. Bring ye flowers, pale flowers !

Bring flowers to the shrine where we kneel in prayer—
They are nature's offering, their place is *there !*
They speak of hope to the fainting heart,
With a voice of promise they come and part,
They sleep in dust through the wintry hours,
They break forth in glory. Bring flowers, bright flowers !

THE CRUSADER'S RETURN.

" Alas ! the mother that him bare,
If she had been in presence there,
In his wan cheeks and sunburnt hair
She had not known her child."—*Marmion.*

Rest, pilgrim, rest ! Thou'rt from the Syrian land,
Thou'rt from the wild and wondrous East, I know
By the long-withered palm-branch in thy hand,
And by the darkness of thy sunburnt brow.
Alas ! the bright, the beautiful, who part
So full of hope, for that far country's bourne !
Alas ! the weary and the changed in heart,
And dimmed in aspect, who like thee return !

Thou'rt faint—stay, rest thee from thy toils at last :
Through the high chestnuts lightly plays the breeze,
The stars gleam out, the *Ave* hour is past,
The sailor's hymn hath died along the seas.
Thou'rt faint and worn—hear'st thou the fountain welling
By the gray pillars of yon ruined shrine ?
Seest thou the dewy grapes before thee swelling ?
He that hath left me trained that loaded vine !

He was a child when thus the bower he wove,
(Oh ! hath a day fled since his childhood's time ?)
That I might sit and hear the sound I love,
Beneath its shade—the convent's vesper-chime.
And sit *thou* there !—for he was gentle ever,
With his glad voice he would have welcomed thee,
And brought fresh fruits to cool thy parched lips' fever
There in his place thou'rt resting—where is he ?

If I could hear that laughing voice again,
But once again ! How oft it wanders by,
In the still hours, like some remembered strain,
Troubling the heart with its wild melody !—
Thou hast seen much, tired pilgrim ! hast thou seen
In that far land, the chosen land of yore,
A youth—my Guido—with the fiery mien
And the dark eye of this Italian shore ?

The dark, clear, lightning eye ! On heaven and earth
It smiled—as if man were not dust it smiled !
The very air seemed kindling with his mirth,
And I—my heart grew young before my child !
My blessed child !—I had but him—yet he
Filled all my home even with o'erflowing joy,
Sweet laughter, and wild song, and footstep free
Where is he now ?—my pride, my flower, my boy !

His sunny childhood melted from my sight,
Like a spring dew-drop. Then his forehead wore
A prouder look—his eye a keener light :
I knew these woods might be his world no more !
He loved me—but he left me ! Thus they go
Whom we have reared, watched, blessed, too much adored !
He heard the trumpet of the Red Cross blow,
And bounded from me with his father's sword !

Thou weep'st—I tremble !—Thou hast seen the slain
Pressing a bloody turf—the young and fair,
With their pale beauty strewing o'er the plain
Where hosts have met · speak ! answer !—was *he* there ?
Oh ! hath his smile departed ? Could the grave
Shut o'er those bursts of bright and tameless glee ?
No ! I shall yet behold his dark locks wave !——
That look gives hope—I knew it could not be !

Still weep'st thou, wanderer ? Some fond mother's glance
O'er thee, too, brooded in thine early years—
Think'st thou of her, whose gentle eye, perchance,
Bathed all thy faded hair with parting tears ?
Speak, for thy tears disturb me !—what art thou ?
Why dost thou hide thy face, yet weeping on ?
Look up ! Oh ! is it—that wan cheek and brow !—
Is it—alas ! yet joy !—my son, my son !

THE REVELLERS.

Ring, joyous chords !—ring out again !
A swifter and a wilder strain !
They are here—the fair face and the careless heart,
And stars shall wane ere the mirthful part.——
But I met a dimly mournful glance,
In a sudden turn of the flying dance ;
I heard the tone of a heavy sigh
In a pause of the thrilling melody !
And it is not well that woe should breathe
On the bright spring-flowers of the festal-wreath !—
Ye that to thought or to grief belong,
Leave, leave the hall of song !

Ring, joyous chords !—But who art *thou*
With the shadowy locks o'er thy pale young brow,
And the world of dreamy gloom that lies
In the misty depths of thy soft dark eyes?
Thou hast loved, fair girl ! thou hast loved too well !
Thou art mourning now o'er a broken spell ;
Thou hast poured thy heart's rich treasures forth,
And art unrepaid for their priceless worth !
Mourn on ! yet come thou not *here* the while,
It is but a pain to see thee smile !
There is not a tone in our songs for thee—
Home with thy sorrows flee !

Ring, joyous chords ! ring out again !——
But what dost thou with the revel's train?
A silvery voice through the soft air floats,
But thou hast no part in the gladdening notes ;
There are bright young faces that pass thee by,
But they fix no glance of thy wandering eye !
Away ! there's a void in thy yearning breast,
Thou weary man ! wilt thou *here* find rest !
Away ! for thy thoughts from the scene have fled,
And the love of *thy* spirit is with the dead :
Thou art but more lone midst the sounds of mirth—
Back to thy silent hearth !

Ring, joyous chords !—ring forth again !
A swifter still, and a wilder strain !——
But *thou*, though a reckless mien be thine,
And thy cup be crowned with the foaming wine,
By the fitful bursts of thy laughter loud,
By thine eye's quick flash through its troubled cloud,
I know thee ! it is but the wakeful fear
Of a haunted bosom that brings thee here !
I know thee !—thou fearest the solemn night,
With her piercing stars and her deep wind's might !

There's a tone in her voice which thou fain wouldst shun,
For it asks what the secret soul hath done !
And thou—there's a dark weight on thine—away !—
Back to thy home, and pray !

Ring, joyous chords !—ring out again !
A swifter still, and a wilder strain !
And bring fresh wreaths !—we will banish all
Save the free in heart from our festive hall.
On ! through the maze of the fleet dance, on !—
But where are the young and the lovely gone ?
Where are the brows with the Red Cross crowned,
And the floating forms with the bright zone bound ?
And the waving locks and the flying feet,
That still should be where the mirthful meet ?—
They are gone—they are fled—they are parted all :
Alas ! the forsaken hall !

THE CONQUEROR'S SLEEP.

Sleep midst thy banners furled !
Yes ! thou art there, upon thy buckler lying,
With the soft wind unfelt around thee sighing,
Thou chief of hosts, whose trumpet shakes the world !
Sleep, while the babe sleeps on its mother's breast.
Oh ! strong is night—for thou too art at rest !

Stillness hath smoothed thy brow,
And now might love keep timid vigils by thee,
Now might the foe with stealthy foot draw nigh thee.
Alike unconscious and defenceless thou !
Tread lightly, watchers ! Now the field is won,
Break not the rest of nature's weary son !

Perchance some lovely dream
Back from the stormy fight thy soul is bearing,
To the green places of thy boyish daring,
And all the windings of thy native stream.
Why, this were joy ! Upon the tented plain,
Dream on, thou Conqueror !—be a child again !

But thou wilt wake at morn,
With thy strong passions to the conflict leaping,
And thy dark troubled thoughts all earth o'ersweeping
So wilt thou rise, O thou of woman born !
And put thy terrors on, till none may dare
Look upon thee—the tired one, slumbering there !

Why, so the peasant sleeps
Beneath his vine !—and man must kneel before thee,
And for his birthright vainly still implore thee !
Shalt thou be stayed because thy brother weeps ?—

Wake ! and forget that midst a dreaming world,
Thou hast lain thus, with all thy banners furled !

Forget that thou, even thou,
Hast feebly shivered when the wind passed o'er thee,
And sunk to rest upon the earth which bore thee,
And felt the night-dew chill thy fevered brow !
Wake with the trumpet, with the spear press on !—
Yet shall the dust take home its mortal son.

OUR LADY'S WELL.[1]

Fount of the woods ! thou art hid no more
From heaven's clear eye, as in time of yore.
For the roof hath sunk from thy mossy walls,
And the sun's free glance on thy slumber falls ;
And the dim tree-shadows across thee pass,
As the boughs are swayed o'er thy silvery glass ;
And the reddening leaves to thy breast are blown,
When the autumn wind hath a stormy tone ;
And thy bubbles rise to the flashing rain—
Bright Fount ! thou art nature's own again !

Fount of the vale ! thou art sought no more
By the pilgrim's foot, as in time of yore,
When he came from afar, his beads to tell,
And to chant his hymn at Our Lady's Well.
There is heard no *Ave* through thy bowers,
Thou art gleaming lone midst thy water-flowers !
But the herd may drink from thy gushing wave,
And there may the reaper his forehead lave,
And the woodman seeks thee not in vain—
Bright Fount ! thou art nature's own again !

Fount of the Virgin's ruined shrine !
A voice that speaks of the past is thine,
It mingles the tone of a thoughtful sigh
With the notes that ring through the laughing sky ;
Midst the mirthful song of the summer bird,
And the sound of the breeze, it will yet be heard !—
Why is it that thus we may gaze on thee,
To the brilliant sunshine sparkling free ?
'Tis that all on earth is of *Time's* domain—
He hath made thee nature's own again !

Fount of the chapel with ages gray !
Thou art springing freshly amidst decay ;

[1] A beautiful spring in the woods near St. Asaph, formerly covered in with a chapel, now in ruins. It was dedicated to the Virgin, and, according to Pennant, much the resort of pilgrims.

Thy rites are closed, and thy cross lies low,
And the changeful hours breathe o'er thee now.
Yet if at thine altar one holy thought
In man's deep spirit of old hath wrought ;
If peace to the mourner hath here been given,
Or prayer, from a chastened heart, to heaven—
Be the spot still hallowed while Time shall reign,
Who hath made thee nature's own again !

THE PARTING OF SUMMER.

THOU'RT bearing hence thy roses,
Glad summer, fare thee well !
Thou'rt art singing thy last melodies
In every wood and dell.

But e'er the golden sunset
Of thy latest lingering day,
Oh ! tell me, o'er this checkered earth,
How hast thou passed away ?

Brightly, sweet Summer ! brightly
Thine hours have floated by,
To the joyous birds of the woodland boughs,
The rangers of the sky ;

And brightly in the forests,
To the wild deer wandering free ;
And brightly, midst the garden flowers,
To the happy murmuring bee :

But how to human bosoms,
With all their hopes and fears
And thoughts that make them eagle wings,
To pierce the unborn years ?

Sweet Summer ! to the captive
Thou hast flown in burning dreams
Of the woods, with all their whispering leaves,
And the blue rejoicing streams ;—

To the wasted and the weary
On the bed of sickness bound,
In swift delirious fantasies,
That changed with every sound ;—

To the sailor on the billows,
In longings, wild and vain,
For the gushing founts and breezy hills,
And the homes of earth again !

And unto me, glad Summer !
How hast thou flown to me ?
My chainless footstep naught hath kept
From thy haunts of song and glee.

Thou hast flown in wayward visions,
In memories of the dead—
In shadows from a troubled heart,
O'er thy sunny pathway shed :

In brief and sudden strivings
To fling a weight aside—
Midst these thy melodies have ceased,
And all thy roses died.

But oh ! thou gentle Summer !
If I greet thy flowers once more,
Bring me again the buoyancy
Wherewith my soul should soar !

Give me to hail thy sunshine
With song and spirit free ;
Or in a purer air than this
May that next meeting be !

SONG OF OUR FATHERS.

——"Sing aloud
Old songs, the precious music of the heart."
WORDSWORTH.

SING them upon the sunny hills,
When days are long and bright,
And the blue gleam of shining rills
Is loveliest to the sight!
Sing them along the misty moor,
Where ancient hunters roved,
And swell them through the torrent's roar,
The songs our fathers loved!

The songs their souls rejoiced to hear
When harps were in the hall,
And each proud note made lance and spear
Thrill on the bannered wall:
The songs that through our valleys green,
Sent on from age to age,
Like his own river's voice, have been
The peasant's heritage.

The reaper sings them when the vale
Is filled with plumy sheaves;
The woodman, by the starlight pale,
Cheered homeward through the leaves:
And unto them the glancing oars
A joyous measure keep,
Where the dark rocks that crest our shores
Dash back the foaming deep.

So let it be! a light they shed
O'er each old fount and grove;
A memory of the gentle dead,
A lingering spell of love.
Murmuring the names of mighty men,
They bid our streams roll on,
And link high thoughts to every glen
Where valiant deeds were done.

Teach them your children round the hearth,
When evening fires burn clear,
And in the fields of harvest mirth,
And on the hills of deer.
So shall each unforgotten word,
When far those loved ones roam,
Call back the hearts which once it stirred
To childhood's holy home.

The green woods of their native land
Shall whisper in the strain,
The voices of their household band
Shall breathe their names again;
The heathery heights in vision rise,
Where, like the stag, they roved,
Sing to your sons those melodies,
The songs your fathers loved!

THE WORLD IN THE OPEN AIR.

COME, while in freshness and dew it lies,
To the world that is under the free blue skies!
Leave ye man's home, and forget his care—
There breathes no sigh on the dayspring's air.

Come to the woods, in whose mossy dells
A light all made for the poet dwells—
A light, colored softly by tender leaves,
Whence the primrose a mellower glow receives.

The stock-dove is there in the beechen tree,
And the lulling tone of the honey-bee ;
And the voice of cool waters 'midst feathery fern,
Shedding sweet sounds from some hidden urn.

There is life, there is youth, there is tameless mirth,
Where the streams, with the lilies they wear, have birth ;
There is peace where the alders are whispering low :
Come from man's dwellings with all their woe !

Yes ! we will come—we will leave behind
The homes and the sorrows of human kind.
It is well to rove where the river leads
Its bright blue vein along sunny meads :

It is well through the rich wild woods to go,
And to pierce the haunts of the fawn and doe ;
And to hear the gushing of gentle springs,
When the heart has been fretted by worldly stings ;

And to watch the colors that flit and pass,
With insect-wings, through the wavy grass ;
And the silvery gleams o'er the ash-tree's bark,
Borne in with a breeze through the foliage dark.

Joyous and far shall our wanderings be,
As the flight of birds o'er the glittering sea :
To the woods, to the dingles where violets blow,
We will bear no memory of earthly woe.

But if by the forest-brook we meet
A line like the pathway of former feet ;
If, 'midst the hills, in some lonely spot,
We reach the gray ruins of tower or cot ;—

If the cell, where a hermit of old hath prayed,
Lift up its cross through the solemn shade ;
Or if some nook, where the wild flowers wave,
Bear token sad of a mortal grave,—

Doubt not but *there* will our steps be stayed,
There our quick spirits awhile delayed ;
There will thought fix our impatient eyes,
And win back our hearts to their sympathies.

For what though the mountains and skies be fair,
Steeped in soft hues of the summer air ?
'Tis the soul of man, by its hopes and dreams,
That lights up all nature with living gleams.

Where it hath suffered and nobly striven,
Where it hath poured forth its vows to heaven ;
Where to repose it hath brightly passed,
O'er this green earth there is glory cast.

QUEEN OF HEA
LIBRARY
DENVER, COLO.

And by the soul, 'midst groves and rills,
And flocks that feed on a thousand hills,
Birds of the forest, and flowers of the sod,
We, only *we*, may be linked to God !

KINDRED HEARTS.

Oh ! ask not, hope thou not too much
Of sympathy below !
Few are the hearts whence one same touch
Bids the sweet fountains flow—
Few—and by still conflicting powers
Forbidden here to meet ;
Such ties would make this life of ours
Too fair for aught so fleet.

It may be that thy brother's eye
Sees not as thine, which turns
In such deep reverence to the sky,
Where the rich sunset burns :
It may be that the breath of spring,
Born amidst violets lone,
A rapture o'er thy soul can bring—
A dream, to his unknown.

The tune that speaks of other times—
A sorrowful delight !
The melody of distant chimes,
The sound of waves by night,
The wind that, with so many a tone,
Some chord within can thrill,—
These may have language all thine own,
To *him* a mystery still.

Yet scorn thou not, for this, the true
And steadfast love of years ;
The kindly, that from childhood grew,
The faithful to thy tears !
If there be one that o'er the dead
Hath in thy grief borne part,
And watched through sickness by thy bed,—
Call *his* a kindred heart !

But for those bonds all perfect made
Wherein bright spirits blend—
Like sister flowers of one sweet shade,
With the same breeze that bend—
For that full bliss of thought allied
Never to mortals given,
Oh ! lay thy lovely dreams aside,
Or lift them unto heaven.

THE TRAVELLER AT THE SOURCE OF THE NILE.

In sunset's light, o'er Afric thrown,
A wanderer proudly stood
Beside the well-spring, deep and lone,
Of Egypt's awful flood—
The cradle of that mighty birth,
So long a hidden thing to earth !

He heard in life's first murmuring sound,
A low mysterious tone—
A music sought, but never found
By kings and warriors gone.
He listened—and his heart beat high :
That was the song of victory !

The rapture of a conqueror's mood
Rushed burning through his frame,—
The depths of that green solitude
Its torrents could not tame ;
Though stillness lay, with eve's last smile,
Round those fair fountains of the Nile.

ight came with stars. Across his soul
There swept a sudden change :
E'en at the pilgrim's glorious goal
A shadow dark and strange
Breathed from the thought, so swift to fall
O'er triumph's hour—*and is this all?* [1]

No more than this ! What seemed it *now*
First by that spring to stand ?
A thousand streams of lovelier flow
Bathed his own mountain-land !
Whence, far o'er waste and ocean track,
Their wild, sweet voices, called him back.

They called him back to many a glade,
His childhood's haunt of play,
Where brightly through the beechen shade
Their waters glanced away ;
They called him, with their sounding waves,
Back to his father's hills and graves.

But, darkly mingling with the thought
Of each familiar scene,
Rose up a fearful vision, fraught
With all that lay between—
The Arab's lance, the desert's gloom,
The whirling sands, the red simoom !

Where was the glow of power and pride ?
The spirit born to roam ?
His altered heart within him died
With yearnings for his home !
All vainly struggling to repress
The gush of painful tenderness.

He wept ! The stars of Afric's heaven
Beheld his bursting tears,
E'en on that spot where fate had given
The meed of toiling years !—
O Happiness ! how far we flee
Thine own sweet paths in search of thee !

CASABIANCA.[2]

The boy stood on the burning deck
Whence all but he had fled,
The flame that lit the battle's wreck
Shone round him o'er the dead.

Yet beautiful and bright he stood,
As born to rule the storm—
A creature of heroic blood,
A proud, though child-like form.

The flames rolled on—he would not go
Without his father's word ;
That father, faint in death below,
His voice no longer heard.

He called aloud :—"Say, father, say
If yet my task is done !"
He knew not that the chieftain lay
Unconscious of his son.

"Speak, father !" once again he cried,
"If I may yet be gone !"

[1] A remarkable description of feelings thus fluctuating from triumph to despondency, is given in Bruce's Abyssinian Travels. The buoyant exultation of his spirits on arriving at the source of the Nile, was almost immediately succeeded by a gloom, which he thus portrays :—"I was, at that very moment, in possession of what had for many years been the principal object of my ambition and wishes : indifference, which, from the usual infirmity of human nature, follows, at least for a time, complete enjoyment, had taken place of it. The marsh and the fountains of the Nile, upon comparison with the rise of many of our rivers, became now a trifling object in my sight. I remember that magnificent scene in my own native country, where the Tweed, Clyde, and Annan, rise in one hill. I began, in my sorrow, to treat the inquiry about the source of the Nile as a violent effort of a distempered fancy."

[2] Young Casabianca, a boy about thirteen years old, son to the Admiral of the Orient, remained at his post (in the Battle of the Nile) after the ship had taken fire, and all the guns had been abandoned ; and perished in the explosion of the vessel, when the flames had reached the powder.

And but the booming shots replied,
And fast the flames rolled on.

Upon his brow he felt their breath,
And in his waving hair,
And looked from that lone post of death
In still yet brave despair ;

And shouted but once more aloud,
"My father ! must I stay ?"
While o'er him fast, through sail and shroud,
The wreathing fires made way.

They wrapt the ship in splendor wild,
They caught the flag on high,
And streamed above the gallant child
Like banners in the sky.

There came a burst of thunder-sound—
The boy—oh ! where was he ?
Ask of the winds that far around
With fragments strewed the sea !—

With mast, and helm, and pennon fair,
That well had borne their part ;
But the noblest thing which perished there
Was that young faithful heart !

THE DIAL OF FLOWERS.[1]

'Twas a lonely thought to mark the hours
As they floated in light away,
By the opening and the folding flowers,
That laugh to the summer's day.

Thus had each moment its own rich hue,
And its graceful cup and bell
In whose colored vase might sleep the dew,
Like a pearl in an ocean-shell.

To such sweet signs might the time have flowed
In a golden current on,
Ere from the garden, man's first abode,
The glorious guests were gone.

So might the days have been brightly told—
Those days of song and dreams—
When shepherds gathered their flocks of old
By the blue Arcadian streams.

So in those isles of delight, that rest
Far off in a breezeless main,
Which many a bark, with a weary quest,
Has sought, but still in vain.

Yet is not life, in its real flight,
Marked thus—even thus—on earth,
By the closing of one hope's delight,
And another's gentle birth ?

Oh ! let us live, so that flower by flower,
Shutting in turn, may leave
A lingering still for the sunset hour,
A charm for the shaded eve.

[1] The dial was, I believe, formed by Linnæus, and marked the hours by the opening and closing, at regular intervals, of the flowers arranged in it.

OUR DAILY PATHS.[1]

"Naught shall prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith that all which we behold
Is full of blessings." WORDSWORTH.

THERE'S beauty all around our paths, if but our watchful eyes
Can trace it midst familiar things, and through their lowly guise ;
We may find it where a hedgerow showers its blossoms o'er our way,
Or a cottage window sparkles forth in the last red light of day.

We may find it where a spring shines clear beneath an aged tree,
With the foxglove o'er the water's glass, borne downwards by the bee ;
Or where a swift and sunny gleam on the birchen stems is thrown,
As a soft wind playing parts the leaves, in copses green and lone.

We may find it in the winter boughs, as they cross the cold blue sky,
While soft on icy pool and stream their pencilled shadows lie,
When we look upon their tracery, by the fairy frost-work bound,
Whence the flitting redbreast shakes a shower of crystals to the ground.

Yes ! beauty dwells in all our paths—but sorrow too is there :
How oft some cloud within us dims the bright, still summer air !
When we carry our sick hearts abroad amidst the joyous things,
That through the leafy places glance on many-colored wings.

With shadows from the past we fill the happy woodland shades,
And a mournful memory of the dead is with us in the glades ;
And our dream-like fancies lend the wind an echo's plaintive tone
Of voices, and of melodies, and of silvery laughter gone.

But are we free to do even thus—to wander as we will,
Bearing sad visions through the grove, and o'er the breezy hill?
No ! in our daily paths lie cares, that ofttimes bind us fast,
While from their narrow round we see the golden day fleet past.

[1] This little poem derives an additional interest from being affectingly associated with a name no less distinguished than that of the late Mr. Dugald Stewart. The admiration he always expressed for Mrs. Hemans's poetry, was mingled with regret that she so generally made choice of melancholy subjects ; and on one occasion, he sent her, through a mutual friend, a message suggestive of his wish that she would employ her fine talent in giving more consolatory views of the ways of Providence, thus infusing comfort and cheer into the bosoms of her readers, in a spirit of Christian philosophy, which, he thought, would be more consonant with the pious mind and loving heart displayed in every line she wrote, than dwelling on what was painful and depressing, however beautifully and touchingly such subjects might be treated of. This message was faithfully transmitted, and almost by return of post, Mrs. Hemans (who was then residing in Wales) sent to the kind friend by whom it had been forwarded, the poem of "Our Daily Paths," requesting it might be given to Mr. Stewart, with an assurance of her gratitude for the interest he took in her writings, and alleging as the reason of the mournful strain which pervaded them, "that a cloud hung over her life which she could not always rise above."

The letter reached Mr. Stewart just as he was stepping into the carriage, to leave his country residence (Kinneil House, the property of the Duke of Hamilton) for Edinburgh—the last time, alas ! his presence was ever to gladden that happy home, as his valuable life was closed very shortly afterwards. The poem was read by his daughter on his way to Edinburgh, and he expressed himself in the highest degree charmed and gratified with the result of his suggestions ; and some of the lines which pleased him more particularly were often repeated to him during the few remaining weeks of his life.

They hold us from the woodlark's haunts, and violet dingles, back,
And from all the lovely sounds and gleams in the shining river's track ;
They bar us from our heritage of spring-time, hope, and mirth,
And weigh our burdened spirits down with the cumbering dust of earth.

Yet should this be ? Too much, too soon, despondingly we yield !
A better lesson we are taught by the lilies of the field !
A sweeter by the birds of heaven—which tells us, in their flight,
Of One that through the desert air forever guides them right.

Shall not this knowledge calm our hearts, and bid vain conflicts cease ?
Ay, when they commune with themselves in holy hours of peace
And feel that by the lights and clouds through which our pathway lies,
By the beauty and the grief alike, we are training for the skies !

THE CROSS IN THE WILDERNESS.

Silent and mournful sat an Indian chief,
In the red sunset, by a grassy tomb ;
His eyes, that might not weep, were dark with grief,
And his arms folded in majestic gloom ;
And his bow lay unstrung, beneath the mound
Which sanctified the gorgeous waste around.

For a pale cross above its greensward rose,
Telling the cedars and the pines that there
Man's heart and hope had struggled with his woes,
And lifted from the dust a voice of prayer.
Now all was hushed—and eve's last splendor shone
With a rich sadness on the attesting stone.

There came a lonely traveller o'er the wild,
And he, too, paused in reverence by that grave,
Asking the tale of its memorial, piled
Between the forests and the lake's bright wave ;
Till, as a wind might stir a withered oak,
On the deep dream of age his accents broke.

And the gray chieftain, slowly rising, said—
"I listened for the words, which, years ago,
Passed o'er these waters. Though the voice is fled
Which made them as a singing fountain's flow,
Yet, when I sit in their long-faded track,
Sometimes the forest's murmur gives them back.

"Askest thou of him whose house is lone beneath ?
I was an eagle in my youthful pride,
When o'er the seas he came, with summer's breath,

To dwell amidst us, on the lake's green side.
Many the times of flowers have been since then—
Many, but bringing naught like *him* again!

"Not with the hunter's bow and spear he came,
O'er the blue hills to chase the flying roe;
Not the dark glory of the woods to tame,
Laying their cedars, like the corn-stalks low;
But to spread tidings of all holy things,
Gladdening our souls, as with the morning's wings

"Doth not yon cypress whisper how we met,
I and my brethren that from earth have gone,
Under its boughs to hear his voice, which yet
Seems through their gloom to send a silvery tone?
He told of One the grave's dark bonds who broke,
And our hearts burned within us as he spoke.

"He told of far and sunny lands, which lie
Beyond the dust wherein our fathers dwell:
Bright must they be! for *there* are none that die,
And none that weep, and none that say 'Farewell!'
He came to guide us thither; but away
The Happy called him, and he might not stay.

"We saw him slowly fade—athirst, perchance,
For the fresh waters of that lovely clime;
Yet was there still a sunbeam in his glance,
And on his gleaming hair no touch of time—
Therefore we hoped: but now the lake looks dim,
For the green summer comes—and finds not him!

"We gathered round him in the dewy hour
Of one still morn, beneath his chosen tree;
From his clear voice, at first, the words of power
Came low, like moanings of a distant sea;
But swelled and shook the wilderness ere long,
As if the spirit of the breeze grew strong.

"And then once more they trembled on his tongue,
And his white eyelids fluttered, and his head
Fell back, and mist upon his forehead hung——
Knowest thou not how we pass to join the dead?
It is enough! he sank upon my breast—
Our friend that loved us, he was gone to rest!

"We buried him where he was wont to pray,
By the calm lake, e'en here, at eventide;
We reared this cross in token where he lay,
For on the cross, he said, his Lord had died!
Now hath he surely reached, o'er mount and wave,
That flowery land whose green turf hides no grave.

"But I am sad! I mourn the clear light taken
Back from my people, o'er whose place it shone,
The pathway to the better shore forsaken,
And the true words forgotten, save by one,
Who hears them faintly sounding from the past,
Mingled with death-songs in each fitful blast."

Then spoke the wanderer forth with kindling eye:
"Son of the wilderness! despair thou not,
Though the bright hour may seem to thee gone by,
And the cloud settled o'er thy nation's lot!
Heaven darkly works—yet, where the seed hath been
There shall the fruitage, glowing yet, be seen.

"Hope on, hope ever!—by the sudden springing
Of green leaves which the winter hid so long;
And by the bursts of free, triumphant singing,
After the cold silent months the woods among;
And by the rending of the frozen chains,
Which bound the glorious rivers on the plains.

"Deem not the words of light that here were spoken,
But as a lovely song, to leave no trace:
Yet shall the gloom which wraps thy hills be broken,
And the full dayspring rise upon thy race!
And fading mists the better path disclose,
And the wide desert blossom as the rose."

So by the cross they parted, in the wild,
Each fraught with musings for life's after day,
Memories to visit *one*, the forest's child,
By many a blue stream in its lonely way;
And upon *one*, midst busy throng to press
Deep thoughts and sad, yet full of holiness.

LAST RITES.

By the mighty minster's bell,
Tolling with a sudden swell;
By the colors half-mast high,
O'er the sea hung mournfully;
Know, a prince hath died!

By the drum's dull muffled sound,
By the arms that sweep the ground,
By the volleying muskets' tone,
Speak ye of a soldier gone
In his manhood's pride.

By the chanted psalm that fills
Reverently the ancient hills,[1]
Learn, that from his harvest done,
Peasants bear a brother on
To his last repose.

By the pall of snowy white
Through the yew-trees gleaming bright
By the garland on the bier
Weep ! a maiden claims thy tear—
Broken is the rose !

Which is the tenderest rite of all ?—
Buried virgin's coronal,
Requiem o'er the monarch's head,
Farewell gun for warrior dead,
Herdsman's funeral hymn ?

Tells not each of human woe ?
Each of hope and strength brought low,
Number each with holy things,
If one chastening thought it brings
Ere life's day grow dim !

THE HEBREW MOTHER.

The rose was in rich bloom on Sharon's plain,
When a young mother, with her first-born, thence
Went up to Zion ; for the boy was vowed
Unto the Temple service. By the hand
She led him, and her silent soul, the while,
Oft as the dewy laughter of his eye
Met her sweet serious glance, rejoiced to think
That aught so pure, so beautiful was hers,
To bring before her God. So passed they on
O'er Judah's hills ; and wheresoe'er the leaves
Of the broad sycamore made sounds at noon,
Like lulling rain-drops, or the olive boughs,
With their cool dimness, crossed the sultry blue
Of Syria's heaven, she paused, that he might rest ;
Yet from her own mee eyelids chased the sleep
That weighed their dark fringe down, to sit and watch
The crimson deepening o'er his cheek's repose,
As at a red flower's heart. And where a fount
Lay, like a twilight star, midst palmy shades,
Making its bank green gems along the wild,
There, too, she lingered, from the diamond wave
Drawing bright water for his rosy lips,

[1] A custom still retained at rural funerals in some parts of England and Wales.

And softly parting clusters of jet curls
To bathe his brow. At last the fane was reached,
The earth's one sanctuary—and rapture hushed
Her bosom, as before her, through the day,
It rose, a mountain of white marble, steeped
In light like floating gold. But when that hour
Waned to the farewell moment, when the boy
Lifted, through rainbow-gleaming tears, his eye
Beseechingly to hers, and half in fear,
Turned from the white-robed priest, and round her arm
Clung even as joy clings—the deep spring-tide
Of nature then swelled high, and o'er her child
Bending, her soul broke forth in mingled sounds
Of weeping and sad song. "Alas!" she cried,—

"Alas! my boy, thy gentle grasp is on me,
The bright tears quiver in thy pleading eyes;
And now fond thoughts arise,
And silver cords again to earth have won me,
And like a vine thou claspest my full heart—
How shall I hence depart?

"How the lone paths retrace where thou wert playing
So late, along the mountains, at my side?
And I, in joyous pride,
By every place of flowers my course delaying,
Wove, e'en as pearls, the lilies round thy hair,
Beholding thee so fair!

"And, oh! the home whence thy bright smile hath parted,
Will it not seem as if the sunny day
Turned from its door away?
While through its chambers wandering, weary-hearted,
I languished for thy voice, which past me still
Went like a singing rill?

"Under the palm-trees thou no more shalt meet me,
When from the fount at evening I return,
With the full water-urn;
Nor will thy sleep's low dove-like breathings greet me,
As midst the silence of the stars I wake,
And watch for thy dear sake.

"And thou, will slumber's dewy clouds fall round thee
Without thy mother's hand to smooth thy bed,
Wilt thou not vainly spread
Thine arms, when darkness as a veil hath wound thee,
To fold my neck, and lift up, in thy fear,
A cry which none shall hear?

"What have I said, my child! Will *He* not hear thee,
Who the young ravens heareth from their nest?
Shall He not guard thy rest,

And, in the hush of holy midnight near thee,
Breathe o'er thy soul, and fill its dreams with joy?
Thou shalt sleep soft, my boy.

"I give thee to thy God—the God that gave thee,
A well-spring of deep gladness to my heart!
And, precious as thou art,
And pure as dew of Hermon, He shall have thee,
My own, my beautiful, my undefiled!
And thou shalt be His child.

"Therefore, farewell! I go—my soul may fail me,
As the hart panteth for the water brooks,
Yearning for thy sweet looks.
But thou, my first-born, droop not, nor bewail me
Thou in the Shadow of the Rock shalt dwell,
The Rock of Strength.—Farewell!"

THE WRECK.

All night the booming minute-gun
Had pealed along the deep,
And mournfully the rising sun
Looked o'er the tide-worn steep.
A bark from India's coral strand,
Before the raging blast,
Had veil'd her topsails to the sand,
And bowed her noble mast.

The queenly ship!—brave hearts had striven,
And true ones died with her!
We saw her mighty cable riven,
Like floating gossamer.
We saw her proud flag struck that morn—
A star once o'er the seas,—
Her anchor gone, her deck uptorn,
And sadder things than these!

We saw her treasures cast away,
The rocks with pearls were sown;
And, strangely sad, the ruby's ray
Flashed out o'er fretted stone.
And gold was strewn the wet sands o'er,
Like ashes by a breeze;
And gorgeous robes—but oh! that shore
Had sadder things than these!

We saw the strong man still and low,
A crushed reed thrown aside;
Yet, by that rigid lip and brow,
Not without strife he died.
And near him on the sea-weed lay—
Till then we had not wept—
But well our gushing hearts might say,
That there a *mother* slept!

For her pale arms a babe had pressed
With such a wreathing grasp,
Billows had dashed o'er that fond breast,
Yet not undone the clasp.
Her very tresses had been flung
To wrap the fair child's form,
Where still their wet long streamers hung
All tangled by the storm.

And beautiful, midst that wild scene,
Gleamed up the boy's dead face,
Like slumber's, trustingly-serene,
In melancholy grace.
Deep in her bosom lay his head,
With half-shut violet-eye—
He had known little of her dread,
Naught of her agony!

O human love! whose yearning heart,
Through all things vainly true,
So stamps upon thy mortal part
Its passionate adieu—
Surely thou hast another lot:
There is some home for thee,
Where thou shalt rest, remembering not
The moaning of the sea!

THE TRUMPET.

The trumpet's voice hath roused the land—
Light up the beacon pyre!
A hundred hills have seen the brand,
And waved the sign of fire.
A hundred banners to the breeze
Their gorgeous folds have cast—
And, hark! was that the sound of seas?
A king to war went past.

The chief is arming in his hall,
The peasant by his hearth;
The mourner hears the thrilling call,
And rises from the earth.
The mother on her first-born son
Looks with a boding eye—
They come not back, though all be won,
Whose young hearts leap so high.

The bard hath ceased his song, and bound
The falchion to his side;
E'en, for the marriage altar crowned,
The lover quits his bride.
And all this haste, and change, and fear,
By *earthly* clarion spread!—
How will it be when kingdoms hear
The blast that wakes the dead?

EVENING PRAYER.

AT A GIRL'S SCHOOL.

"Now in thy youth, beseech of Him
Who giveth, upbraiding not,
That his light in thy heart becomes not dim,
And his love be unforgot;
And thy God, in the darkest of days, will be
Greenness, and beauty, and strength to thee."—BERNARD BARTON.

Hush! 'tis a holy hour. The quiet room
Seems like a temple, while yon soft lamp sheds
A faint and starry radiance, through the gloom
And the sweet stillness, down on fair young heads,
With all their clustering locks, untouched by care,
And bowed, as flowers are bowed in night, in prayer.

Gaze on—'tis lovely! Childhood's lip and cheek,
Mantling beneath its earnest brow of thought!
Gaze—yet what seest thou in those fair, and meek,
And fragile things, as but for sunshine wrought?—
Thou seest what grief must nurture for the sky,
What death must fashion for eternity!

O joyous creatures! that will sink to rest,
Lightly, when those pure orisons are done,
As birds, with slumber's honey-dew oppressed,

Midst the dim folded leaves, at set of sun—
Lift up your hearts ! though yet no sorrow lies
Dark in the summer-heaven of those clear eyes.

Though fresh within your breasts the untroubled springs
Of hope make melody where'er ye tread,
And o'er your sleep bright shadows, from the wings
Of spirits visiting but youth, be spread ;
Yet in those flute-like voices, mingling low,
Is woman's tenderness—how soon her woe !

Her lot is on you—silent tears to weep,
And patient smiles to wear through suffering's hour,
And sunless riches, from affection's deep,
To pour on broken reeds—a wasted shower !
And to make idols, and to find them clay,
And to bewail that worship. Therefore pray !

Her lot is on you—to be found untired,
Watching the stars out by the bed of pain,
With a pale cheek, and yet a brow inspired,
And a true heart of hope, though hope be vain ;
Meekly to bear with wrong, to cheer decay,
And, oh ! to love through all things. Therefore pray !

And take the thought of this calm vesper time,
With its low murmuring sounds and silvery light,
On through the dark days fading from their prime,
As a sweet dew to keep your souls from blight !
Earth will forsake—Oh ! happy to have given
The unbroken heart's first fragrance unto heaven.

THE HOUR OF DEATH.

" Il est dans la Nature d'aimer à se livrer à l'idée même qu'on redoute."—CORINNE.

LEAVES have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the north wind's breath,
And stars to set—but all,
Thou hast *all* seasons for thine own, O Death !

Day is for mortal care,
Eve, for glad meetings round the joyous hearth,
Night, for the dreams of sleep, the voice of prayer—
But all for thee, thou mightiest of the earth.

The banquet hath its hour—
Its feverish hour, of mirth, and song, and wine ;
There comes a day for grief's overwhelming power,
A time for softer tears—but all are thine.

Youth and the opening rose
May look like things too glorious for decay,
And smile at thee—but thou art not of those
That wait the ripened bloom to seize their prey.

Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the north wind's breath,
And stars to set—but all,
Thou hast *all* seasons for thine own, O Death !

We know when moons shall wane,
When summer birds from far shall cross the sea,
When autumn's hue shall tinge the golden grain.
But who shall teach us when to look for thee !

Is it when spring's first gale
Comes forth to whisper where the violets lie ?
Is it when roses in our paths grow pale !—
They have *one* season—*all* are ours to die

Thou art where billows foam,
Thou art where music melts upon the air ;
Thou art around us in our peaceful home,
And the world calls us forth—and thou art there.

Thou art where friend meets friend,
Beneath the shadow of the elm to rest—
Thou art where foe meets foe, and trumpets rend
The skies, and swords beat down the princely crest.

Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the north wind's breath
And stars to set—but all—
Thou hast *all* seasons for thine own, O Death !

THE LOST PLEIAD.

"Like the lost Pleiad seen no more below."—Byron.

And is there glory from the heavens departed ?
O void unmarked !—thy sisters of the sky
Still hold their place on high,
Though from its rank thine orb so long hath started,
Thou, that no more art seen of mortal eye !

Hath the night lost a gem, the regal night ?
She wears her crown of old magnificence,
Though thou art exiled thence—
No desert seems to part those urns of light,
Midst the far depths of purple gloom intense.

They rise in joy, the starry myriads burning—
The shepherd greets them on his mountains free ;
And from the silvery sea
To them the sailor's wakeful eye is turning—
Unchanged they rise, they have not mourned for thee.

Couldst thou be shaken from thy radiant place,
Even as a dew-drop from thy myrtle spray,
Swept by the wind away ?
Wert thou not peopled by some glorious race,
And was there power to smite them with decay ?

Why, who shall talk of thrones, of sceptres riven ?
Bowed be our hearts to think on what *we* are,
When from its height afar
A world sinks thus—and yon majestic heaven
Shines not the less for that one vanished star !

THE CLIFFS OF DOVER.

"The inviolate Island of the sage and free."—Byron.

Rocks of my country ! let the cloud
Your crested heights array,
And rise ye like a fortress proud
Above the surge and spray !

My spirit greets you as ye stand,
Breasting the billow's foam :
Oh ! thus forever guard the land,
The severed land of home !

I have left blue skies behind,
Lighting up classic shrines,
And music in the southern wind,
And sunshine on the vines.

The breathings of the myrtle flowers
Have floated o'er my way ;
The pilgrim's voice, at vesper hours,
Hath soothed me with its lay.

The isles of Greece, the hills of Spain,
The purple heavens of Rome—
Yes, all are glorious,—yet again
I bless thee, land of home !

For thine the Sabbath peace, my land !
And thine the guarded hearth ;
And thine the dead—the noble band,
That make thee holy earth.

Their voices meet me in thy breeze,
Their steps are on thy plains ;
Their names, by old majestic trees,
Are whispered round thy fanes.

Their blood hath mingled with the tide
Of thine exulting sea :
Oh, be it still a joy, a pride,
To live and die for thee !

THE GRAVES OF MARTYRS.

THE kings of old have shrine and tomb
In many a minster's haughty gloom ;
And green, along the ocean side,
The mounds arise where heroes died ;
But show me, on thy flowery breast,
Earth, where thy *nameless* martyrs rest !

The thousands that, uncheered by praise,
Have made one offering of their days ;
For Truth, for Heaven, for Freedom's sake,
Resigned the bitter cup to take :
And silently, in fearless faith,
Bowing their noble souls to death.

Where sleep they, Earth? By no proud stone
Their narrow couch of rest is known ;
The still sad glory of their name
Hallows no fountain unto Fame ;
No—not a tree the record bears
Of their deep thoughts and lonely prayers.

Yet haply all around lie strewed
The ashes of that multitude :
It may be that each day we tread
Where thus devoted hearts have bled ;
And the young flowers our children sow,
Take root in holy dust below.

Oh, that the many-rustling leaves,
Which round our homes the summer weaves,
Or that the streams, in whose glad voice
Our own familiar paths rejoice,
Might whisper through the starry sky,
To tell where those blest slumberers lie !

Would not our inmost hearts be stilled,
With knowledge of their presence filled,
And by its breathings taught to prize
The meekness of self-sacrifice ?
—But the old woods and sounding waves
Are silent of those hidden graves.

Yet what if no light footstep there
In pilgrim-love and awe repair,
So let it be ! Like him, whose clay
Deep buried by his Maker lay,
They sleep in secret,—but their sod,
Unknown to man, is marked of God!

THE HOUR OF PRAYER.

" Pregar, pregar, pregar,
Ch' altro ponno i mortali al pianger nati ? "—ALFIERI.

CHILD, amidst the flowers at play,
While the red light fades away ;
Mother, with thine earnest eye,
Ever following silently ;
Father, by the breeze of eve
Called thy harvest-work to leave—
Pray : ere yet the dark hours be,
Lift the heart and bend the knee !

Traveller, in the stranger's land,
Far from thine own household band ;
Mourner, haunted by the tone
Of a voice from this world gone ;
Captive, in whose narrow cell
Sunshine hath not leave to dwell ;
Sailor on the darkening sea—
Lift the heart and bend the knee !

Warrior, that from battle won
Breathest now at set of sun ;
Woman, o'er the lowly slain
Weeping on his burial-plain ;
Ye that triumph, ye that sigh,
Kindred by one holy tie,
Heaven's first star alike ye see—
Lift the heart and bend the knee !

THE VOICE OF HOME TO THE PRODIGAL.

"Von Bäumen, aus Wellen, aus Mauern,
Wie ruft es dir freundlich und lind;
Was hast du zu wandern, zu trauern?—
Komm' spielen, du freundliches Kind!"
LA MOTTE FOUQUE.

Oh! when wilt thou return
To thy spirit's early loves?
To the freshness of the morn,
To the stillness of the groves?

The summer birds are calling
Thy household porch around,
And the merry waters falling
With sweet laughter in their sound.

And a thousand bright-veined flowers,
From their banks of moss and fern,
Breathe of the sunny hours—
But when wilt thou return?

Oh! thou hast wandered long
From thy home without a guide;
And thy native woodland song
In thine altered heart hath died.

Thou hast flung the wealth away,
And the glory of thy spring;
And to thee the leaves' light play
Is a long-forgotten thing.

But when wilt thou return?—
Sweet dews may freshen soon
The flower, within whose urn
Too fiercely gazed the noon.

O'er the image of the sky,
Which the lake's clear bosom wore,
Darkly may shadows lie—
But not for evermore.

Give back thy heart again
To the freedom of the woods,
To the bird's triumphant strain,
To the mountain solitudes!

But when wilt thou return?
Along thine own pure air
There are young sweet voices borne—
Oh! should not thine be there?

Still at thy father's board
There is kept a place for thee;
And, by the smile restored,
Joy round the hearth shall be.

Still hath thy mother's eye,
Thy coming step to greet,
A look of days gone by,
Tender and gravely sweet.

Still, when the prayer is said,
For thee kind bosoms yearn,
For thee fond tears are shed—
Oh! when wilt thou return?

THE WAKENING.

How many thousands are wakening now!
Some to the songs from the forest bough,
To the rustling of leaves at the lattice pane,
To the chiming fall of the early rain.

And some, far out on the deep mid-sea,
To the dash of the waves in their foaming glee,
As they break into spray on the ship's tall side,
That holds through the tumult her path of pride.

And some—oh, well may *their* hearts rejoice !—
To the gentle sound of a mother's voice :
Long shall they yearn for that kindly tone,
When from the board and the hearth 'tis gone.

And some, in the camp, to the bugle's breath,
And the tramp of the steed on the echoing heath,
And the sudden roar of the hostile gun,
Which tells that a field must ere night be won.

And some, in the gloomy convict cell,
To the dull deep note of the warning bell,
As it heavily calls them forth to die,
When the bright sun mounts in the laughing sky.

And some to the peal of the hunter's horn,
And some to the din from the city borne,
And some to the rolling of torrent floods,
Far midst old mountains and solemn woods.

So are we roused on this checkered earth :
Each unto light hath a daily birth ;
Though fearful or joyous, though sad or sweet,
Are the voices which first our upspringing meet.

But *one* must the sound be, and *one* the call,
Which from the dust shall awaken us all :
One !—but to severed and distant dooms,
How shall the sleepers arise from the tombs ?

THE BREEZE FROM SHORE.

["Poetry reveals to us the loveliness of nature, brings back the freshness of youthful feeling, revives the relish of simple pleasures, keeps unquenched the enthusiasm which warmed the springtime of our being, refines youthful love, strengthens our interest in human nature, by vivid delineations of its tenderest and loftiest feelings; and, through the brightness of its prophetic visions, helps faith to lay hold on the future life."—CHANNING.]

Joy is upon the lonely seas,
When Indian forests pour
Forth, to the billow and the breeze
Their odors from the shore ;
Joy, when the soft air's fanning sigh
Bears on the breath of Araby.

Oh ! Welcome are the winds that tell
A wanderer of the deep
Where, far away, the jasmines dwell,
And where the myrrh-trees weep !
Blest on the sounding surge and foam
Are tidings of the citron's home !

The sailor at the helm they meet,
And hope his bosom stirs,
Upspringing, midst the waves, to greet
The fair earth's messengers,
That woo him, from the moaning main,
Back to her glorious bowers again.

They woo him, whispering lovely tales
Of many a flowering glade,
And fount's bright gleam, in island vales
Of golden-fruited shade :
Across his lone ship's wake they bring
A vision and a glow of spring.

And, O ye masters of the lay !
Come not even thus your songs
That meet us on life's weary way,
Amidst her toiling throngs ?
Yes ! o'er the spirit thus they bear
A current of celestial air.

Their power is from the brighter clime
That in our birth hath part ;
Their tones are of the world, which time
Sears not within the heart !
They tell us of the living light
In its green places ever bright.

They call us, with a voice divine,
Back to our early love,—
Our vows of youth at many a shrine,
Whence far and fast we rove.
Welcome high thought and holy strain
That make us Truth's and Heaven's again !

THE DYING IMPROVISATORE.[1]

" My heart shall be poured over thee—and break."
Prophecy of Dante.

The spirit of my land,
It visits me once more !—though I must die
Far from the myrtles which thy breeze hath fanned,
My own bright Italy !

It is, it is thy breath,
Which stirs my soul e'en yet, as wavering flame
Is shaken by the wind,—in life and death
Still trembling, yet the same !

[1] Sestini, the Roman Improvisatore, when on his deathbed at Paris, is said to have poured forth a Farewell to Italy, in his most impassioned poetry.

Oh ! that love's quenchless power
Might waft my voice to fill thy summer sky,
And through thy groves its dying music shower
Italy ! Italy !

The nightingale is there,
The sunbeam's glow, the citron-flower's perfume,
The south wind's whisper in the scented air—
It will not pierce the tomb !

Never, oh ! never more,
On thy Rome's purple heaven mine eye shall dwell,
Or watch the bright waves melt along thy shore—
My Italy ! farewell !

Alas !—thy hills among
Had I but left a memory of my name,
Of love and grief one deep, true, fervent song,
Unto immortal fame !

But like a lute's brief tone,
Like a rose-odor on the breezes cast,
Like a swift flush of dayspring, seen and gone
So hath my spirit passed—

Pouring itself away
As a wild bird amidst the foliage turns
That which within him triumphs, beats, or burns,
Into a fleeting lay ;

That swells, and floats, and dies,
Leaving no echo to the summer woods
Of the rich breathings and impassioned sighs
Which thrilled their solitudes.

Yet, yet remember me !
Friends ! that upon its murmurs oft have hung,
When from my bosom, joyously and free,
The fiery fountain sprung.

Under the dark rich blue
Of midnight heavens, and on the star-lit sea,
And when woods kindle into spring's first hue,
Sweet friends ! remember me !

And in the marble halls,
Where life's full glow the dreams of beauty wear,
And poet-thoughts embodied light the walls,
Let me be with you there !

Fain would I bind for you,
My memory with all glorious things to dwell !
Fain bid all lovely sounds my name renew—
Sweet friends ! bright land ! farewell !

MUSIC OF YESTERDAY.

"O! mein Geist, ich fühle es in mir, strebt nach etwas Ueberirdischem, das keinem Menschen gegönnt ist."—TIECK.

THE chord, the harp's full chord is hushed,
The voice hath died away,
Whence music, like sweet waters, gushed
But yesterday.

The awakening note, the breeze-like swell,
The full o'ersweeping tone,
The sounds that sighed "Farewell, farewell!"
Are gone—all gone!

The love, whose fervent spirit passed
With the rich measure's flow;
The grief, to which it sank at last—
Where are they now?

They are with the scents by summer's breath
Borne from a rose now shed:
With the words from lips long sealed in death—
Forever fled.

The sea-shell of its native deep
A moaning thrill retains;
But earth and air no record keep
Of parted strains.

And all the memories, all the dreams,
They woke in floating by;
The tender thoughts, the Elysian gleams—
Could these too die?

They died! As on the water's breast
The ripple melts away,
When the breeze that stirred it sinks to rest—
So perished they!

Mysterious in their sudden birth,
And mournful in their close,
Passing, and finding not on earth
Aim or repose.

Whence were they!—like the breath of flowers
Why thus to come and go?
A long, long journey must be ours
Ere this we know.

THE FORSAKEN HEARTH.

"Was mir fehlt?—Mir fehlt ja alles,
Bin so ganz verlassen hier!"

Tyrolese Melody.

The Hearth, the Hearth is desolate! the fire is quenched and gone
That into happy children's eyes once brightly laughing shone;
The place where mirth and music met is hushed through day and night
Oh! for one kind, one sunny face, of all that there made light!

But scattered are those pleasant smiles afar by mount and shore,
Like gleaming waters from one spring dispersed to meet no more.
Those kindred eyes reflect not now each other's joy or mirth,
Unbound is that sweet wreath of home—alas! the lonely hearth!

The voices that have mingled here now speak another tongue,
Or breathe, perchance, to alien ears the songs their mother sung.
Sad, strangely sad, in stranger lands, must sound each household tone;
The hearth, the hearth is desolate! the bright fire quenched and gone!

But *are* they speaking, singing yet, as in their days of glee?
Those voices, are they lovely still, still sweet on earth or sea?
Oh some are hushed, and some are changed, and never shall one strain
Blend their fraternal cadences triumphantly again.

And of the hearts that here were linked by long-remembered years,
Alas! the brother knows not now when fall the sister's tears!
One haply revels at the feast, while one may droop alone:
For broken is the household chain, the bright fire quenched and gone!

Not so—'tis *not* a broken chain: thy memory binds them still,
Thou holy hearth of other days! though silent now and chill.
The smiles, the tears, the rites, beheld by thine attesting stone,
Have yet a living power to mark thy children for thine own.

The father's voice, the mother's prayer, though called from earth away,
With music rising from the dead, their spirits yet shall sway;
And by the past, and by the grave, the parted yet are one,
Though the loved hearth be desolate, the bright fire quenched and gone!

THE DREAMER.

"There is no such thing as forgetting, possible to the mind; a thousand accidents may, and will, interpose a veil between our present consciousness and the secret inscription on the mind; but alike, whether veiled or unveiled, the inscription remains forever."

English Opium-Eater.

"Thou hast been called, O sleep! the friend of woe,
But 'tis the happy who have called thee so."

Southey.

Peace to thy dreams? thou art slumbering now—
The moonlight's calm is upon thy brow;

All the deep love that o'erflows thy breast
Lies 'midst the hush of their heart at rest—
Like the scent of a flower in its folded bell,
When eve through the woodlands hath sighed farewell.

Peace! The sad memories that through the day
With a weight on thy lonely bosom lay,
The sudden thoughts of the changed and dead,
That bowed thee as winds bow the willow's head,
The yearnings for faces and voices gone—
All are forgotten! Sleep on, sleep on!

Are they forgotten? It is not so!
Slumber divides not the heart from its woe.
E'en now o'er thine aspect swift changes pass,
Like lights and shades over wavy grass:
Tremblest thou, Dreamer? O love and grief!
Ye have storms that shake e'en the closed-up leaf!

On thy parted lips there's a quivering thrill,
As on a lyre ere its chords are still;
On the long silk lashes that fringe thine eye,
There's a large tear gathering heavily—
A rain from the clouds of thy spirit pressed:
Sorrowful Dreamer! this is not rest!

It is Thought at work amidst buried hours—
It is Love keeping vigil o'er perished flowers.
—Oh, we bear within us mysterious things!
Of Memory and Anguish, unfathomed springs;
And Passion—those gulfs of the heart to fill
With bitter waves, which it ne'er may still.

Well might we pause ere we gave them sway,
Flinging the peace of our couch away!
Well might we look on our souls in fear—
They find no fount of oblivion here!
They forget not, the mantle of sleep beneath—
How know we if under the wings of death?

THE WINGS OF THE DOVE.

"Oh, that I had wings like a dove, for then would I fly away and be at rest."—
PSALM IV.

OH, for thy wings, thou dove!
Now sailing by with sunshine on thy breast;
That, borne like thee above,
I too might flee away, and be at rest

Where wilt thou fold those plumes,
Bird of the forest-shadows, holiest bird ?
In what rich leafy glooms,
By the sweet voice of hidden waters stirred ?

Over what blessed home,
What roof with dark, deep summer foliage crowned,
O fair as ocean's foam !
Shall thy bright bosom shed a gleam around ?

Or seekest thou some old shrine
Of nymph or saint, no more by votary wooed,
Though still, as if divine,
Breathing a spirit o'er the solitude ?

Yet wherefore ask thy way ?
Blest, ever blest, whate'er its aim, thou art !
Unto the greenwood spray,
Bearing no dark remembrance at thy heart !

No echoes that will blend
A sadness with the whispers of the grove ;
No memory of a friend
Far off, or dead, or changed to thee, thou dove !

Oh ! to some cool recess
Take, take me with thee on the summer wind,
Leaving the weariness
And all the fever of this life behind :

The aching and the void
Within the heart, whereunto none reply,
The young bright hopes destroyed—
Bird ! bear me with thee through the sunny sky !

Wild wish, and longing vain,
And brief upspringing to be glad and free !
Go to thy woodland reign :
My soul is bound and held—I may not flee.

For even by all the fears
And thoughts that haunt my dreams—untold, unknown
And burning woman's tears,
Poured from mine eyes in silence and alone ;

Had I thy wings, thou dove !
High 'midst the gorgeous isles of cloud to soar,
Soon the strong cords of love
Would draw me earthwards—homewards—yet once more.

PSYCHE BORNE BY THE ZEPHYRS TO THE ISLAND OF PLEASURE.[1]

"Souvent l'ame, fortifiée par lar contemplation des choses divines, voudroit déployer ses ailes vers le ciel. Elle croit qu'au terme de sa carrière un rideau va se lever pour lui découvrir des scènes de lumière ; mais quand la mort touche son corps périssable, elle jette un regard en arrière vers les plaisirs terrestres et vers ses compagnes mortelles."

SCHLEGEL, translated by MADAME DE STAEL.

FEARFULLY and mournfully
Thou biddst the earth farewell ;
And yet thou'rt passing, loveliest one !
In a brighter land to dwell.

Ascend, ascend rejoicing !
The sunshine of that shore
Around thee, as a glorious robe,
Shall stream forevermore.

The breezy music wandering
There through the Elysian sky,
Hath no deep tone that seems to float
From a happier time gone by.

And there the day's last crimson
Gives no sad memories birth,
No thought of dead or distant friends,
Or partings—as on earth.

Yet fearfully and mournfully
Thou biddst that earth farewell,
Although thou'rt passing, loveliest one !
In a brighter land to dwell.

A land where all is deathless—
The sunny wave's repose,
The wood with its rich melodies,
The summer and its rose :

A land that sees no parting,
That hears no sound of sighs,
That waits thee with immortal air—
Lift, lift those anxious eyes !

Oh ! how like *thee*, thou trembler !
Man's spirit fondly clings
With timid love, to this, its world
Of old familiar things !

We pant, we thirst for fountains
That gush not here below !
On, on we toil, allured by dreams
Of the living water's flow :

We pine for kindred natures
To mingle with our own ;
For communings more full and high
Than aught by mortal known :

We strive with brief asprings
Against our bonds in vain ;
Yet summoned to be free at last,
We shrink—and clasp our chain ;

And fearfully and mournfully
We bid the earth farewell,
Though passing from its mists, like thee,
In a brighter world to dwell.

THE BOON OF MEMORY.

"Many things answered me."—*Manfred.*

I GO, I go !—and must mine image fade
From the green spots wherein my childhood played,
By my own streams ?
Must my life part from each familiar place,
As a bird's song, that leaves the woods no trace
Of its lone themes ?

[1] Written for a picture in which Psyche, on her flight upwards, is represented looking back sadly and anxiously to the earth.

Will the friend pass my dwelling, and forget
The welcomes there, the hours when we have met
In grief or glee?
All the sweet counsel, the communion high,
The kindly words of trust, in days gone by,
Poured full and free?

A boon, a talisman, O Memory! give,
To shrine my name in hearts where I would live
Forevermore!
Bid the wind speak of me where I have dwelt,
Bid the stream's voice, of all my soul hath felt,
A thought restore!

In the rich rose, whose bloom I loved so well,
In the dim brooding violet of the dell,
Set deep that thought;
And let the sunset's melancholy glow,
And let the spring's first whisper, faint and low,
With me be fraught!

And Memory answered me:—"Wild wish, and vain!
I have no hues the loveliest to detain
In the heart's core.
The place they held in bosoms all their own,
Soon with new shadows filled, new flowers o'ergrown,
Is theirs no more."

Hast *thou* such power, O Love? And Love replied:
—"It is not mine! Pour out thy soul's full tide
Of hope and trust,
Prayer, tear, devotedness, that boon to gain—
'Tis but to write, with the heart's fiery rain,
Wild words on dust!"

Song, is the gift with thee? I ask a lay,
Soft, fervent, deep, that will not pass away
From the still breast;
Filled with a tone—oh! not for deathless fame,
But a sweet haunting murmur of my name,
Where it would rest.

And Song made answer:—"It is not in me,
Though called immortal; though my gifts may be
All but divine.
A place of lonely brightness I can give:
A changeless one, where thou with Love wouldst live—
This is not mine!"

Death, Death! wilt *thou* the restless wish fulfil?
And Death, the Strong One, spoke:—"I can but still
Each vain regret.

What if forgotten ?—All thy soul would crave,
Thou, too, within the mantle of the grave,
Wilt soon forged."

Then did my heart in lone faint sadness die,
As from all nature's voices one reply,
But one—was given.
"Earth has *no* heart, fond dreamer ! with a tone
To send thee back the spirit of thine own—
Seek it in heaven."

I GO, SWEET FRIENDS !

I go, sweet friends ! yet think of me
When spring's young voice awakes the flowers ;
For we have wandered far and free
In those bright hours, the violet's hours.

I go ; but when you pause to hear
From distant hills the Sabbath-bell
On summer-winds float silvery clear,
Think on me then—I loved it well !

Forget me not around your hearth,
When cheerly smiles the ruddy blaze ;
For dear hath been its evening mirth
To me, sweet friends, in other days.

And oh ! when music's voice is heard
To melt in strains of parting woe,
When hearts to love and grief are stirred,
Think of me then ! I go, I go !

ANGEL VISITS.

"No more of talk where God or angel guest,
With man, as with his friend, familiar used
To sit indulgent, and with him partake
Rural repast." MILTON.

Are ye forever to your skies departed ?
Oh ! will ye visit this dim world no more ?
Ye, whose bright wings a solemn splendor darted
Through Eden's fresh and flowering shades of yore ?
Now are the fountains dried on that sweet spot,
And ye—our faded earth beholds you not !

Yet, by your shining eyes not all forsaken,
Man wandered from his Paradise away ;
Ye, from forgetfulness his heart to waken,
Came down, high guests ! in many a later day,
And with the patriarchs, under vine or oak,
'Midst noontide calm or hush of evening, spoke.

From you, the veil of midnight darkness rending,
Came the rich mysteries to the sleeper's eye,
That saw your hosts ascending and descending
On those bright steps between the earth and sky :
Trembling he woke, and bowed o'er glory's trace,
And worshipped awe-struck, in that fearful place.

By Chebar's [1] brook ye passed, such radiance wearing
As mortal vision might but ill endure ;
Along the stream the living chariot bearing,
With its high crystal arch, intensely pure ;
And the dread rushing of your wings that hour,
Was like the noise of waters in their power.

But in the Olive Mount, by night appearing,
'Midst the dim leaves, your holiest work was done.
Whose was the voice that came divinely cheering,
Fraught with the breath of God, to aid his Son ?
—Haply of those that, on the moonlit plains,
Wafted good tidings unto Syrian swains.

Yet one more task was yours ! Your heavenly dwelling
Ye left, and by the unsealed sepulchral stone,
In glorious raiment, sat ; the weepers telling,
That *He* they sought had triumphed, and was gone.
Now have ye left us for the brighter shore ;
Your presence lights the lonely groves no more.

But may ye not, unseen, around us hover,
With gentle promptings and sweet influence yet,
Though the fresh glory of those days be over,
When, 'midst the palm-trees, man your footsteps met;
Are ye not near, when faith and hope rise high,
When love, by strength, o'ermasters agony ?

Are ye not near when sorrow, unrepining,
Yields up life's treasures unto Him who gave ?
When martyrs, all things for his sake resigning,
Lead on the march of death, serenely brave ?
Dreams ! But a deeper thought our souls may fill ;
One, One is near—a spirit holier still !

[1] Ezek. x.

IVY SONG.

WRITTEN ON RECEIVING SOME IVY LEAVES GATHERED FROM THE RUINED CASTLE OF RHEINFELS, ON THE RHINE.

Oh! how could Fancy crown with *thee*
In ancient days the God of Wine,
And bid thee at the banquet be
Companion of the vine?
Thy home, wild plant! is where each sound
Of revelry hath long been o'er,
Where song's full notes once pealed around,
But now are heard no more.

The Roman on his battle-plains,
Where kings before his eagles bent,
Entwined thee with exulting strains
Around the victor's tent.
Yet there, though fresh in glossy green,
Triumphantly thy boughs might wave,
Better thou lovest the silent scene
Around the Victor's grave.

Where sleep the sons of ages flown,
The bards and heroes of the past;
Where, through the halls of glory gone,
Murmurs the wintry blast;
Where years are hastening to efface
Each record of the grand and fair;
Thou, in thy solitary grace,
Wreath of the tomb! art there.

Oh! many a temple, once sublime,
Beneath a blue Italian sky,
Hath naught of beauty left by time,
Save thy wild tapestry!
And, reared 'midst crags and clouds, 'tis thine
To wave where banners wave of yore,
O'er towers that crest the noble Rhine,
Along his rocky shore.

High from the fields of air look down
Those eyries of a vanished race—
Homes of the mighty, whose renown
Hath passed, and left no trace.
But there thou art!—thy foliage bright
Unchanged the mountain storm can brave;
'Thou, that wilt climb the loftiest height,
Or deck the humblest grave!

'Tis still the same! Where'er we tread,
The wrecks of human power we see—
The marvels of all ages fled
Left to decay and thee!
And still let man his fabric rear,
August, in beauty, grace, and strength;
Days pass—thou ivy never sere![1]—
And all is thine at length!

TO ONE OF THE AUTHOR'S CHILDREN ON HIS BIRTH-DAY.

Where sucks the bee now? Summer is flying,
Leaves round the elm-tree faded are lying;
Violets are gone from their grassy dell,
With the cowslip cups, where the fairies dwell;
The rose from the garden hath passed away— [day!
Yet happy, fair boy, is thy natal
For love bids it welcome, the love which hath smiled
Ever around thee, my gentle child!
Watching thy footsteps, and guarding thy bed,
And pouring out joy on thy sunny head.
Roses may vanish, but *this* will stay—
Happy and bright is thy natal day!

[1] "Ye myrtles brown, and ivy never sere."
LYCIDAS.

ON A SIMILAR OCCASION.

Thou wakest from rosy sleep, to play
With bounding heart, my boy!
Before thee lies a long bright day
Of summer and of joy.

Thou hast no heavy thought or dream
To cloud thy fearless eye:
Long be it thus!—life's early stream
Should still reflect the sky.

Yet, ere the cares of life lie dim
On thy young spirit's wings
Now in thy morn forget not Him
From whom each pure thought springs.

So, in the onward vale of tears,
Where'er thy path may be,
When strength hath bowed to evil years,
He will remember thee!

CHRIST STILLING THE TEMPEST.

Fear was within the tossing bark
When the stormy winds grew loud,
And waves came rolling high and dark,
And the tall mast was bowed.

And men stood breathless in their dread,
And baffled in their skill;
But One was there, who rose and said
To the wild sea—*Be still!*

And the wind ceased—it ceased! that word
Passed through the gloomy sky;
The troubled billows knew their Lord,
And fell beneath His eye.

And slumber settled on the deep,
And silence on the blast;
They sank, as flowers that fold to sleep
When sultry day is past.

O Thou! that in its wildest hour
Didst rule the tempest's mood,
Send thy meek spirit forth in power,
Soft on our souls to brood!

Thou that didst bow the billow's pride
Thy mandate to fulfil!
Oh, speak to passion's raging tide,
Speak, and say, "*Peace be still!*"

EPITAPH

OVER THE GRAVE OF TWO BROTHERS, A CHILD AND A YOUTH.

Thou, that canst gaze upon thine own fair boy,
And hear his prayer's low murmur at thy knee,
And o'er his slumber bend in breathless joy,
Come to this tomb!—it hath a voice for thee!
Pray! Thou art blest—ask strength for sorrow's hour:
Love, deep as thine, lays here its broken flower.

Thou that art gathering from the smile of youth
Thy thousand hopes, rejoicing to behold
All the heart's depths before thee bright with truth,
All the mind's treasures silently unfold,
Look on this tomb!—for thee, too, speaks the grave,
Where God hath sealed the fount of hope he gave.

MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTION.

Earth ! guard what here we lay in holy trust,
That which hath left our home a darkened place,
Wanting the form, the smile, now veiled with dust,
The light departed with our loveliest face.
Yet from thy bonds our sorrow's hope is free—
We have but lent the beautiful to thee.

But thou, O Heaven ! keep, keep what *thou* hast taken,
And with our treasure keep our hearts on high ;
The spirit meek, and yet by pain unshaken,
The faith, the love, the lofty constancy—
Guide us where these are with our sisters flown—
They were of Thee, and thou hast claimed thine own !

THE SOUND OF THE SEA.

Thou art sounding on, thou mighty sea !
Forever and the same ;
The ancient rocks yet ring to thee—
Those thunders naught can tame.

Oh ! many a glorious voice is gone
From the rich bowers of earth,
And hushed is many a lovely one
Of mournfulness or mirth.

The Dorian flute that sighed of yore
Along the wave, is still ;
The harp of Judah peals no more
On Zion's awful hill.

The Memnon's lyre hath lost the chord
That breathed the mystic tone ;
And the songs at Rome's high triumph poured,
Are with her eagles flown.

And mute the Moorish horn that rang
O'er stream and mountain free ;
And the hymn the leagued Crusaders sang
Hath died in Galilee.

But thou art swelling on, thou deep !
Through many an olden clime,
Thy billowy anthem, ne'er to sleep
Until the close of time.

Thou liftest up thy solemn voice
To every wind and sky,
And all our earth's green shores rejoice
In that one harmony.

It fills the noontide's calm profound,
The sunset's heaven of gold ;
And the still midnight hears the sound,
Even as first it rolled.

Let there be silence, deep and strange,
Where sceptred cities rose !
Thou speakest of One who doth not change—
So may our hearts repose.

THE CHILD AND DOVE.

SUGGESTED BY CHANTREY'S STATUE OF LADY LOUISA RUSSELL.

Thou art a thing on our dreams to rise,
Midst the echoes of long-lost melodies,
And to fling bright dew from the morning back,
Fair form ! on each image of childhood's track.

Thou art a thing to recall the hours
When the love of our souls was on leaves and flowers,
When a world was our own in some dim sweet grove,
And treasure untold in one captive dove.

Are they gone ? can we think it while *thou* art there,
Thou joyous child with the clustering hair ?
Is it not spring that indeed breathes free
And fresh o'er each thought, while we gaze on thee ?

No ! never more may we smile as thou
Sheddest round smiles from thy sunny brow ;
Yet something it is, in our hearts to shrine
A memory of beauty undimmed as thine—

To have met the joy of thy speaking face,
To have felt the spell of thy breezy grace,
To have lingered before thee, and turned, and borne
One vision away of the cloudless morn.

A DIRGE.

Calm on the bosom of thy God
Young spirit, rest thee now !
Even while with us thy footstep trod,
His seal was on thy brow.

Dust, to its narrow house beneath !
Soul, to its place on high !—
They that have seen thy look in death,
No more may fear to die.

Lone are the paths, and sad the bowers,
Whence thy meek smile is gone ;
But oh !—a brighter home than ours,
In heaven is now thine own.

SCENE IN A DALECARLIAN MINE.

"Oh ! fondly, fervently, those two had loved,
Had mingled minds in Love's own perfect trust ;
Had watched bright sunsets, dreamt of blissful years ;
——And thus they met."

"HASTE, with your torches, hasts ! make firelight round !"
They speed, they press : what hath the miner found ?
Relic or treasure—giant sword of old ?
Gems bedded deep—rich veins of burning gold ?
—Not so—the dead, the dead ! An awe-struck band
In silence gathering round the silent stand,
Chained by one feeling, hushing e'en their breath,
Before the thing that, in the might of death,
Fearful, yet beautiful, amidst them lay—
A sleeper, dreaming not !—a youth with hair
Making a sunny gleam (how sadly fair !)
O'er his cold brow : no shadow of decay
Had touched those pale, bright features—yet he wore
A mien of other days, a garb of yore.
Who could unfold that mystery ? From the throng
A woman wildly broke ; her eye was dim,
As if through many tears, through vigils long,
Through weary strainings :—all had been for him !
These two had loved ! And there he lay, the dead,
In his youth's flower—and she, the living, stood
With her gray hair, whence hue and gloss had fled—
And wasted form, and cheek, whose flushing blood
Had long since ebbed—a meeting sad and strange !
—Oh ! are not meetings in this world of change
Sadder than partings oft ! She stood there, still,
And mute, and gazing—all her soul to fill
With the loved face once more—the young, fair face,
Midst that rude cavern, touched with sculpture's grace,
By torchlight and by death : until at last
From her deep heart the spirit of the past
Gushed in low broken tones—"And there thou art !
And thus we meet, that loved, and did but part
As for a few brief hours ! My friend, my friend !
First love, and only one ! Is this the end
Of hope deferred, youth blighted ? Yet thy brow
Still wears its own proud beauty, and thy cheek
Smiles—how unchanged !—while I, the worn, and weak,
And faded—oh ! thou wouldst but scorn me now,
If thou couldst look on me !—a withered leaf,
Seared—though for thy sake—by the blast of grief !
Better to see thee thus ! For thou didst go
Bearing my image on thy heart, I know,

Unto the dead. My Ulric ! through the night
How have I called thee ! With the morning light
How have I watched for thee !—wept, wandered, prayed,
Met the fierce mountain-tempest, undismayed,
In search of thee !—bound my worn life to one—
One torturing hope ! Now let me die ! 'Tis gone.
Take thy betrothed !" And on his breast she fell,
—Oh ! since their youth's last passionate farewell,
How changed in all but love !—the true, the strong,
Joining in death whom life had parted long !
They had one grave—one lonely bridal-bed,
No friend, no kinsman there a tear to shed !
His name had ceased—*her* heart outlived each tie,
Once more to look on that dead face and die !

ENGLISH SOLDIER'S SONG OF MEMORY.

TO THE AIR OF "AM RHEIN, AM RHEIN !"

Sing, sing in memory of the brave departed,
Let song and wine be poured !
Pledge to their fame, the free and fearless hearted,
Our brethren of the sword !

Oft at the feast, and in the fight, their voices
Have mingled with our own ;
Fill high the cup ! but when the soul rejoices,
Forget not who are gone.

They that stood with us, midst the dead and dying,
On Albuera's plain ;
They that beside us cheerily tracked the flying,
Far o'er the hills of Spain ;

They that amidst us, when the shells were showering
From old Rodrigo's wall,
The rampart scaled, through clouds of battle towering,
First, first at Victory's call ;

They that upheld the banners, proudly waving,
In Roncesvalles' dell,
With England's blood, the southern vineyards laving—
Forget not how they fell !

Sing, sing in memory of the brave departed,
Let song and wine be poured !
Pledge to their fame, the free and fearless hearted,
Our brethren of the sword !

HAUNTED GROUND.

"And slight, withal, may be the things which bring
Back on the heart the weight which it would fling,
Aside forever—it may be a sound,
A tone of music, summer eve, or spring,
A flower—the wind—the ocean—which shall wound,
Striking the electric train, wherewith we are darkly bound."
BYRON.

YES, it *is* haunted, this quiet scene,
Fair as it looks, and all softly green ;
Yet fear thou not—for the spell is thrown,
And the might of the shadow, on me alone.

Are thy thoughts wandering to elves and fays,
And spirits that dwell where the water plays ?
Oh ! in the heart there are stronger powers,
That sway, though viewless, this world of ours !

Have I not lived midst these lonely dells,
And loved and sorrowed, and heard farewells,
And learned in my own deep soul to look,
And tremble before that mysterious book ?

Have I not, under these whispering leaves,
Woven such dreams as the young heart, weaves ?
Shadows—yet unto which life seemed bound ;
And is it not—is it not haunted ground ?

Must I not hear what *thou* hearest not,
Troubling the air of the sunny spot ?
Is there not something to rouse but me,
Told by the rustling of every tree ?

Song hath been here, with its flow of thought ;
Love, with its passionate visions fraught ;
Death, breathing stillness and sadness round ;
And is it not—is it not haunted ground ?

Are there no phantoms, but such as come
By night from the darkness that wraps the tomb ?
A sound, a scent, or a whispering breeze,
Can summon up mightier far than these !

But I may not linger amidst them here !
Lovely they are, and yet things to fear ;
Passing and leaving a weight behind,
And a thrill on the chords of the stricken mind.

Away, away !—that my soul may soar
As a free bird of blue skies once more !
Here from its wing it may never cast
The chain by those spirits brought back from the past.

Doubt it not—smile not—but go thou, too,
Look on the scenes where thy childhood grew—
Where thou hast prayed at thy mother s knee,
Where thou hast roved with thy brethren free ;

Go thou, when life unto thee is changed,
Friends thou hast loved as thy soul, estranged;
When from the idols thy heart hath made,
Thou hast seen the colors of glory fade.

Oh! painfully then, by the wind's low sigh,
By the voice of the stream, by the flower-cup's dye,
By a thousand tokens of sight and sound,
Thou wilt feel thou art treading on haunted ground.

THE CHILD OF THE FORESTS.

WRITTEN AFTER READING THE MEMORIES OF JOHN HUNTER.

Is not thy heart far off amidst the woods,
Where the Red Indian lays his father's dust,
And, by the rushing of the torrent floods,
To the Great Spirit bows in silent trust?
Doth not thy soul o'ersweep the foaming main,
To pour itself upon the wilds again?

They are gone forth, the desert's warrior race,
By stormy lakes to track the elk and roe;
But where art thou, the swift one in the chase,
With thy free footstep and unfailing bow?
Their singing shafts have reached the panther's lair,
And where art thou?—thine arrows are not there.

They rest beside their streams—the spoil is won—
They hang their spears upon the cypress bough;
The night-fires blaze, the hunter's work is done—
They hear the tales of old—but where art thou?
The night-fires blaze beneath the giant pine,
And there a place is filled that once was thine.

For thou art mingling with the city's throng,
And thou hast thrown thine Indian bow aside;
Child of the forests! thou art borne along,
E'en as ourselves, by life's tempestuous tide.
But will this be? and canst thou *here* find rest?
Thou hadst thy nature on the desert's breast.

Comes not the sound of torrents to thine ear
From the savanna-land, the land of streams?
Hearest thou not murmurs which none else may hear?
Is not the forest's shadow on thy dreams?
They call—wild voices call thee o'er the main,
Back to thy free and boundless woods again.

Hear them not! hear them not!—thou canst not find
In the far wilderness what once was thine!
Thou hast quaffed knowledge from the founts of mind,
And gathered loftier aims and hopes divine.
Thou knowest the soaring thought, the immortal strain—
Seek not the deserts and the woods again!

STANZAS TO THE MEMORY OF ——.

In the full tide of melody and mirth,
While joy's bright spirit beams from every eye,
Forget not him, whose soul, though fled from earth,
Seems yet to speak in strains that cannot die.

Forget him not, for many a festal hour,
Charmed by those strains for us has lightly flown :
And memory's visions, mingling with their power,
Wake the heart's thrill at each familiar tone.

Blest be the harmonist, whose well-known lays
Revive life's morning dreams, when youth is fled,
And, fraught with images of other days,
Recall the loved, the absent, and the dead.

His the dear art whose spells awhile renew
Hope's first illusions in their tenderest bloom—
Oh ! what were life, unless such moments threw
Bright gleams, "like angel visits," o'er its gloom ?

THE VAUDOIS VALLEYS.

Yes ! thou hast met the sun's last smile
From the haunted hills of Rome ;
By many a bright Ægean isle
Thou hast seen the billows foam.

From the silence of the Pyramid,
Thou hast watched the solemn flow
Of the Nile, that with its waters hid
The ancient realm below.

Thy heart hath burned, as shepherds sung
Some wild and warlike strain,
Where the Moorish horn once proudly rung
Through the pealing hills of Spain.

And o'er the lonely Grecian streams
Thou hast heard the laurels moan,
With a sound yet murmuring in thy dreams
Of the glory that is gone.

But go thou to the pastoral vales
Of the Alpine mountains old,
If thou wouldst hear immortal tales
By the wind's deep whispers told !

Go, if thou lovest the soil to tread
Where man hath nobly striven,
And life, like incense, hath been shed,
An offering unto heaven.

For o'er the snows, and round the pines,
Hath swept a noble flood ;
The nurture of the peasant's vines
Hath been the martyr's blood !

A spirit, stronger than the sword,
And loftier than despair,
Through all the heroic region poured,
Breathes in the generous air.

A memory clings to every steep
Of long-enduring faith,
And the sounding streams glad record keep
Of courage unto death.

Ask of the peasant *where* his sires
For truth and freedom bled ?
Ask, where were lit the torturing fires,
Where lay the holy dead !

And he will tell thee, all around,
On fount, and turf, and stone,
Far as the chamois' foot can bound,
Their ashes have been sown!

Go, when the Sabbath-bell is heard[1]
Up through the wilds to float,
When the dark old woods and caves are stirred
To gladness by the note;

When forth, along their thousand rills,
The mountain people come,
Join thou their worship on those hills
Of glorious martyrdom.

And while the song of praise ascends,
And while the torrent's voice,
Like the swell of many an organ, blends,
Then let thy soul rejoice.

Rejoice, that human hearts, through scorn,
Through shame, through death, made strong,
Before the rocks and heavens have borne
Witness of God so long!

SONG OF THE SPANISH WANDERER.

Pilgrim! oh say, hath thy cheek been fanned
By the sweet winds of my sunny land?
Knowest thou the sound of its mountain pines?
And hast thou rested beneath its vines?

Hast thou heard the music still wandering by,
A thing of the breezes, in Spain's blue sky,
Floating away o'er hill and heath
With the myrtle's whisper, the citron's breath?

Then say, are there fairer vales than those
Where the warbling of fountains forever flows?
Are there brighter flowers than mine own, which wave
O'er Moorish ruin and Christian grave?

O sunshine and song! they are lying far
By the streams that look to the western star;
My heart is fainting to hear once more
The water-voices of that sweet shore.

Many were they that have died for thee,
And brave, my Spain! though thou art not free;
But I call them blest—they have rent *their* chain—
They sleep in thy valleys, my sunny Spain!

[1] See Gilly's *Researches among the Mountains of Piedmont*, for an interesting account of a Sabbath-day among the upper regions of the Vaudois. The inhabitants of these Protestant valleys, who, like the Swiss, repair with their flocks and herds to the summit of the hills during the summer, are followed thither by their pastors, and at that season of the year assemble on that sacred day to worship in the open air.

THE CONTADINA.

WRITTEN FOR A PICTURE.

Not for the myrtle, and not for the vine,
Though its grape, like a gem, be the sunbeam's shrine;
And not for the rich blue heaven that showers
Joy on thy spirit, like light on the flowers;
And not for the scent of the citron trees—
Fair peasant! I call thee not blest for *these*.

Not for the beauty spread over thy brow,
Though round thee a gleam, as of spring, it throw;
And not for the lustre that laughs from thine eye,
Like a dark stream's flash to the sunny sky,
Though the south in its riches naught lovelier sees—
Fair peasant! I call thee not blest for *these*.

But for those breathing and loving things—
For the boy's fond arm that around thee clings,
For the smiling cheek on thy lap that glows,
In the peace of a trusting child's repose—
For the hearts whose home is thy gentle breast,
Oh! richly I call thee, and deeply blest!

TROUBADOUR SONG.

The warrior crossed the ocean's foam
For the stormy fields of war;
The maid was left in a smiling home
And a sunny land afar.

His voice was heard where javelin showers
Poured on the steel-clad line;
Her step was midst the summer flowers,
Her seat beneath the vine.

His shield was cleft, his lance was riven,
And the red blood stained his crest;
While she—the gentlest wind of heaven
Might scarcely fan her breast!

Yet a thousand arrows passed him by,
And again he crossed the seas;
But she had died as roses die
That perish with a breeze—
As roses die, when the blast is come
For all things bright and fair.
There was death within the smiling home—
How had death found her there?

HOMES OF ENGLAND.

"Where's the coward that would not dare
To fight for such a land?"—*Marmion.*

The stately homes of England,
How beautiful they stand,
Amidst their tall ancestral trees,
O'er all the pleasant land!

The deer across their greenward bound,
Through shade and sunny gleam;
And the swan glides past them with the sound
Of some rejoicing stream.

The merry homes of England!
Around their hearths by night,
What gladsome looks of household love
Meet in the ruddy light!

There woman's voice flows forth in song,
Or childhood's tale is told,
Or lips move tunefully along
Some glorious page of old.

The blessed homes of England!
How softly on their bowers
Is laid the holy quietness
That breathes from Sabbath hours!
Solemn, yet sweet, the church-bell's chime
Floats through their woods at morn.
All other sounds, in that still time,
Of breeze and leaf are born.

The cottage homes of England!
By thousands on her plains,
They are smiling o'er the silvery brooks,
And round the hamlet fanes.
Through glowing orchards forth they peep,
Each from its nook of leaves;
And fearless there the lowly sleep,
As the bird beneath their eaves.

The free, fair homes of England!
Long, long, in hut and hall,
May hearts of native proof be reared
To guard each hallowed wall!
And green forever be the groves,
And bright the flowery sod,
Where first the child's glad spirit loves
Its country and its God!

THE SICILIAN CAPTIVE.

"I have dreamt thou wert
A captive in thy hopelessness; afar
From the sweet home of thy young infancy,
Whose image unto thee is as a dream
Of fire and slaughter; I can see thee wasting,
Sick of thy native air."

L. E. L.

THE champions had come from their fields of war,
Over the crests of the billows far;
They had brought back the spoils of a hundred shores,
Where the deep had foamed to their flashing oars.

They sat at their feast round the Norse king's board;
By the glare of the torch-light the mead was poured;
The hearth was heaped with the pine-boughs high,
And it flung a red radiance on shields thrown by.

The Scalds had chanted in Runic rhyme
Their songs of the sword and the olden time;
And a solemn thrill, as the harp-chords rung,
Had breathed from the walls where the bright spears hung.

But the swell was gone from the quivering string,
They had summoned a softer voice to sing;
And a captive girl, at the warriors' call,
Stood forth in the midst of that frowning hall.

Lonely she stood,—in her mournful eyes
Lay the clear midnight of southern skies;
And the drooping fringe of their lashes low,
Half-veiled a depth of unfathomed woe.

Stately she stood—though her fragile frame
Seemed struck with the blight of some inward flame,
And her proud pale brow had a shade of scorn,
Under the waves of her dark hair worn.

And a deep flush passed, like a crimson haze,
O'er her marble cheek by the pine-fire's blaze—
No soft hue caught from the south wind's breath,
But a token of fever at strife with death.

She had been torn from her home away,
With her long locks crowned for her bridal-day,
And brought to die of the burning dreams
That haunt the exile by foreign streams.

They bade her sing of her distant land—
She held its lyre with a trembling hand,
Till the spirit its blue skies had given her woke,
And the stream of her voice into music broke.

Faint was the strain, in its first wild flow—
Troubled its murmur, and sad and low;
But it swelled into deeper power ere long,
As the breeze that swept o'er her soul grew strong.

"They bid me sing of thee, mine own, my sunny land! of thee!
Am I not parted from thy shores by the mournful-sounding sea!
Doth not thy shadow wrap my soul! in silence let me die,
In a voiceless dream of thy silvery founts, and thy pure, deep sapphire sky.
How should thy lyre give *here* its wealth of buried sweetness forth—
Its tones of summer's breathings born, to the wild winds of the north?

"Yet thus it shall be once, once more! My spirit shall awake,
And through the mists of death shine out, my country, for thy sake!
That I may make *thee* known, with all the beauty and the light,
And the glory never more to bless thy daughter's yearning sight!
Thy woods shall whisper in my song, thy bright streams warble by,
Thy soul flow o'er my lips again—yet once, my Sicily!

"There are blue heavens—far hence, far hence! but, oh! their glorious blue,
Its very night is beautiful with the hyacinth's deep hue!
It is above my own fair land, and round my laughing home,
And arching o'er my vintage hills, they hang their cloudless dome!
And making all the waves as gems, that melt along the shore,
And steeping happy hearts in joy—that now is mine no more.

"And there are haunts in that green land—oh! who may dream or tell
Of all the shaded loveliness it hides in grot and dell!
By fountains flinging rainbow-spray on dark and glossy leaves,
And bowers wherein the forest-dove her nest untroubled weaves;
The myrtle dwells there, sending round the richness of its breath,
And the violets gleam like amethysts from the dewy moss beneath.

"And there are floating sounds that fill the skies through night and day—
Sweet sounds! the soul to hear them faints in dreams of heaven away;

They wander through the olive woods, and o'er the shining seas—
They mingle with the orange scents that load the sleepy breeze ;
Lute, voice, and bird are blending there,—it were a bliss to die,
As dies a leaf, thy groves among, my flowery Sicily !

"*I* may not thus depart—farewell ! Yet no, my country ! no !
Is not love stronger than the grave ? I feel it must be so !
My fleeting spirit shall o'ersweep the mountains and the main,
And in thy tender starlight rove, and through thy woods again.
Its passions deepens—it prevails !—I break my chain—I come
To dwell a viewless thing, yet blest—in thy sweet air, my home !"

And her pale arms dropped the ringing lyre—
There came a mist o'er her eye's wild fire—
And her dark rich tresses in many a fold,
Loosed from their braids, down her bosom rolled.
For her head sank back on the rugged wall,
A silence fell o'er the warrior's hall ;
She had poured out her soul with her song's last tone :
The lyre was broken, the minstrel gone !

IVAN THE CZAR.

["Ivan le Terrible, étant deja devenu vieux, assiégait Novgorod. Les Boyards, le voyant affoibli, lui démandèrent s'il ne voulait pas donner le commandement de l'assaut à son fils. Sa fureur fut si grande à cette proposition, que rien ne pût l'appaiser : son fils se prosterna à ses pieds ; il le repoussa avec un coup d'une telle violence, que deux jours après le malheureux en mourut. Le père, alors au désespoir, devint indifférent à la guerre comme au pouvoir, et ne survécut que peu de mois à son fils."—*Dix Annés d'Exil*, par MADAME DE STAEL.]

"Gieb diesen Todten mir heraus. Ich muss
Ihn wieder haben ! . . . . .
. . . . . Trostlose allmacht,
Die nicht einmal in Gräber ihren arm
Verlangern, eine kleine Ubereilung
Mit Menschenleben nicht verbessern kann !"
SCHILLER.

HE sat in silence on the ground,
The old and haughty Czar,
Lonely, though princes girt him round,
And leaders of the war ;
He had cast his jewelled sabre,
That many a field had won,
To the earth beside his youthful dead—
His fair and first-born son.

With a robe of ermine for its bed,
Was laid that form of clay,
Where the light a stormy sunset shed
Through the rich tent made way ;
And a sad and solemn beauty
On the pallid face came down,
Which the lord of nations mutely watched,
In the dust, with his renown.

Low tones at last, of woe and fear,
From his full bosom broke—
A mournful thing it was to hear
How then the proud man spoke ?
The voice that through the combat
Had shouted far and high,
Came forth in strange, dull, hollow tones,
Burdened with agony.

"There is no crimson on thy cheek,
And on thy lip no breath ;
I call thee, and thou dost not speak—

They tell me this is death !
And fearful things are whispering
That I the deed have done—
For the honor of thy father's name
Look up, look up, my son !

"Well might I know death's hue and mien—
But on *thine* aspect, boy !
What, till this moment, have I seen
Save pride and tameless joy ?
Swiftest thou wert to battle,
And bravest there of all—
How could I think a warrior's frame
Thus like a flower should fall ?

"I will not bear that still cold look—
Rise up, thou fierce and free !
Wake as the storm wakes ! I will brook
All, save this calm, from thee !
Lift brightly up, and proudly,
Once more thy kindling eyes !
Hath my word lost its power on earth ?
I say to thee, arise !

"Didst thou not know I loved thee well !
Thou didst not ! and art gone,
In bitterness of soul, to dwell
Where man must dwell alone.
Come back, young fiery spirit !
If but one hour, to learn
The secrets of the folded heart
That seemed to thee so stern.

"Thou wert the first, the first, fair child
That in mine arms I pressed :
Thou wert the bright one, that hast smiled
Like summer on my breast !
I reared thee as an eagle,
To the chase thy steps I led,
I bore thee on my battle-horse,
I look upon thee—dead !

"Lay down my warlike banners here,
Never again to wave,
And bury my red sword and spear,
Chiefs ! in my first-born's grave !
And leave me !—I have conquered,
I have slain—my work is done !
Whom have I slain ?—ye answer not—
Thou too art mute, my son !"

And thus his wild lament was poured
Through the dark resounding night,
And the battle knew no more his sword,
Nor the foaming steed his might.
He heard strange voices moaning
In every wind that sighed ;
From the searching stars of heaven he shrank—
Humbly the conqueror died.

CAROLAN'S PROPHECY.[1]

"Thy cheek too swiftly flushes, o'er thine eye
The lights and shadows come and go too fast ;
Thy tears gush forth too soon, and in thy voice
Are sounds of tenderness too passionate
For peace on earth : oh ! therefore, child of song !
'Tis well thou shouldst depart."

A SOUND of music, from amidst the hills,
Came suddenly, and died ; a fitful sound

[1] Founded on the following circumstance related in the *Percy Anecdotes* of imagination.

"It is somewhat remarkable that Carolan, the Irish bard, even in his gayest mood, never could compose a planxty for a Miss Brett, in the county of Sligo, whose father's house he frequented, and where he always met with a reception due to his exquisite taste and mental endowments. One day, after an unsuccessful attempt to compose something in a sprightly strain for this lady, he threw aside his harp with a mixture of rage and grief, and addressing himself in Irish to her mother, 'Madam,' said he,

Of mirth, soon lost in wail. Again it rose,
And sank in mournfulness. There sat a bard
By a blue stream of Erin, where it swept
Flashing through rock and wood : the sunset's light
Was on his wavy, silver-gleaming hair,
And the wind's whisper in the mountain ash,
Whose clusters drooped above. His head was bowed,
His hand was on his harp, yet thence its touch
Had drawn but broken strains ; and many stood
Waiting around, in silent earnestness,
The unchaining of his soul, the gush of song—
Many and graceful forms !—yet one alone
Seemed present to his dream ; and she, indeed,
With her pale virgin brow, and changeful cheek,
And the clear starlight of her serious eyes,
Lovely amidst the flowing of dark locks
And pallid braiding flowers, was beautiful,
E'en painfully !—a creature to behold
With trembling 'midst our joy, lest aught unseen
Should waft the vision from us, leaving earth
Too dim without its brightness ! Did such fear
O'ershadow in that hour the gifted one,
By his own rushing stream ? Once more he gazed
Upon the radiant girl, and yet once more
From the deep chords his wandering hand brought out
A few short festive notes, an opening strain
Of bridal melody, soon dashed with grief—
As if some wailing spirit in the strings
Met and o'ermastered him ; but yielding then
To the strong prophet impulse, mournfully,
Like moaning waters o'er the harp he poured
The trouble of his haunted soul and sang—

"Voice of the grave !
I hear thy thrilling call ;
It comes in the dash of the foaming wave,
In the sere leaf's trembling fall !
In the shiver of the tree,
I hear thee, O thou voice !
And I would thy warning were but for me,
That my spirit might rejoice.

"But thou art sent
For the sad earth's young and fair,
For the graceful heads that have not bent
To the wintry hand of care !
They hear the wind's low sigh,
And the river sweeping free,

"I have often, from my great respect to your family, attempted a planxty in order to celebrate your daughter's perfections, but to no purpose. Some evil genius hovers over me ; there is not a string in my harp that does not vibrate a melancholy sound when I set about this task. I fear she is not doomed to remain long among us ; nay,' said he emphatically, 'she will not survive twelve months.' The event verified the prediction, and the young lady died within the period limited by the unconsciously prophetic bard."

And the green reeds murmuring heavily,
And the woods—but they hear not thee!

"Long have I striven
With my deep-foreboding soul,
But the full tide now its bounds hath riven,
And darkly on must roll.
There's a young brow smiling near,
With a bridal white rose wreath—
Unto *me* it smiles from a flowery bier,
Touched solemnly by death!

"Fair art thou, Morna!
The sadness of thine eye
Is beautiful as silvery clouds
On the dark-blue summer sky!
And thy voice comes like the sound
Of a sweet and hidden rill,
That makes the dim woods tuneful round—
But soon it must be still!

"Silence and dust
On thy sunny lips must lie—
Make not the strength of love thy trust,
A stronger yet is nigh!
No strain of festal flow
That my hand for thee hath tried,
But into dirge-notes wild and low
Its ringing tones have died.

"Young art thou, Morna!
Yet on thy gentle head,
Like heavy dew on the lily's leaves,
A spirit hath been shed!
And the glance is thine which sees
Through nature's awful heart—
But bright things go with the summer breeze,
And thou too must depart!

"Yet, shall I weep?
I know that in thy breast
There swells a fount of song too deep
Too powerful for thy rest!
And the bitterness I know,
And the chill of this world's breath—
Go—all undimmed in thy glory, go!
Young and crowned bride of death!

"Take hence to heaven
Thy holy thoughts and bright!
And soaring hopes, that were not given
For the touch of mortal blight!
Might we follow in thy track,
This parting should not be!
But the spring shall give us violets back,
And every flower but thee!"

There was a burst of tears around the bard :
All wept but one—and she serenely stood,
With her clear brow and dark religious eye,
Raised to the first faint star above the hills,
And cloudless ; though it might be that her cheek
Was paler than before. So Morna heard
The minstrel's prophecy.
And spring returned,
Bringing the earth her lovely things again—
All, save the loveliest far ! A voice, a smile,
A young sweet spirit gone.

THE LADY OF THE CASTLE.

FROM THE "PORTRAIT GALLERY," AN UNFINISHED POEM.

"If there be but one spot on thy name,
One eye thou fearest to meet, one human voice
Whose tones thou shrinkest from—Woman ! veil thy face,
And bow thy head—and die ! "

Thou seest her pictured with her shining hair,
(Famed were those tresses in Provençal song,)
Half braided, half o'er cheek and bosom fair
Let loose, and pouring sunny waves along
Her gorgeous vest. A child's light hand is roving
Midst the rich curls ; and, oh ! how meekly loving
Its earnest looks are lifted to the face
Which bends to meet its lip in laughing grace !
Yet that bright lady's eye, methinks, hath less
Of deep, and still, and pensive tenderness,
Than might beseem a mother's ; on her brow
Something too much there sits of native scorn,
And her smile kindles with a conscious glow,
As from the thought of sovereign beauty born.
These may be dreams—but how shall woman tell
Of woman's shame, and not with tears ? She fell !
That mother left that child !—went hurrying by
Its cradle—haply not without a sigh,
Haply one moment o'er its rest serene
She hung. But no ! it could not thus have been,
For *she went on !*—forsook her home, her hearth,
All pure affection, all sweet household mirth,
To live a gaudy and dishonored thing,
Sharing in guilt the splendors of a king.

Her lord, in very weariness of life,
Girt on his sword for scenes of distant strife.
He recked no more of glory : grief and shame
Crushed out his fiery nature, and his name
Died silently. A shadow o'er his halls
Crept year by year · the minstrel passed their walls ;
The warder's horn hung mute. Meantime the child
On whose first flowering thoughts no parent smiled,

A gentle girl, and yet deep-hearted, grew
Into sad youth ; for well, too well, she knew
Her mother's tale ! Its memory made the sky
Seem all too joyous for her shrinking eye ;
Checked on her lip the flow of song, which fain
Would there have lingered ; flushed her cheek to pain,
If met by sudden glance ; and gave a tone
Of sorrow, as for something lovely gone,
E'en to the spring's glad voice. Her own was low
And plaintive. Oh ! there lie such depths of woe
In a *young* blighted spirit ! Manhood rears
A haughty brow, and age has done with tears ;
But youth bows down to misery, in amaze
At the dark cloud o'ermantling its fresh days ;—
And thus it was with her. A mournful sight
In one so fair—for she indeed was fair ;
Not with her mother's dazzling eyes of light—
Hers were more shadowy, full of thought and prayer,
And with long lashes o'er a white-rose cheek
Drooping in gloom, yet tender still and meek,
Still that fond child's—and oh ! the brow above
So pale and pure ! so formed for holy love
To gaze upon in silence !—But she felt
That love was not for her, though hearts would melt
Where'er she moved, and reverence mutely given
Went with her ; and low prayers, that called on heaven
To bless the young Isaure.

One sunny morn
With alms before her castle gate she stood,
Midst peasant groups : when, breathless and o'erworn,
And shrouded in long weeds of widowhood,
A stranger through them broke. The orphan maid
With her sweet voice and proffered hand of aid,
Turned to give welcome ; but a wild sad look
Met hers—a gaze that all her spirit shook ;
And that pale woman, suddenly subdued
By some strong passion, in its gushing mood,
Knelt at her feet, and bathed them with such tears
As rain the hoarded agonies of years
From the heart's urn ; and with her white lips pressed
The ground they trod ; then, burying in her vest
Her brow's deep flush, sobbed out—" Oh undefiled !
I am thy mother—spurn me not, my child ! "

Isaure had prayed for that lost mother ; wept
O'er her stained memory, while the happy slept
In the hushed midnight ; stood with mournful gaze
Before yon picture's smile of other days,
But never breathed in human ear the name
Which weighed her being to the earth with shame.
What marvel if the anguish, the surprise,
The dark remembrances, the altered guise,

Awhile o'erpowered her? From the weeper's touch
She shrank—'twas but a moment—yet too much
For that all-humbled one; its mortal stroke
Came down like lightning, and her full heart broke
At once in silence. Heavily and prone
She sank, while o'er her castle's threshold stone,
Those long fair tresses—*they* still brightly wore
Their early pride, though bound with pearls no more—
Bursting their fillet, in sad beauty rolled,
And swept the dust with coils of wavy gold.

Her child bent o'er her—called her: 'twas too late
Dead lay the wanderer at her own proud gate!
The joy of courts, the star of knight and bard—
How didst thou fall, O bright-haired Ermengarde!

THE MOURNER FOR THE BARMECIDES.

> "O good old man! how well in thee appears
> The constant service of the antique world!
> Thou art not for the fashion of these times."
>
> *As you Like it.*

Fallen was the house of Giafar; and its name,
The high romantic name of Barmecide,
A sound forbidden on its own bright shores,
By the swift Tigris' wave. Stern Haroun's wrath,
Sweeping the mighty with their fame away,
Had so passed sentence: but man's chainless heart
Hides that within its depths which never yet
The oppressor's thought could reach.

'Twas desolate
Where Giafar's halls, beneath the burning sun,
Spread out in ruin lay. The songs had ceased;
The lights, the perfumes, and the genii tales
Had ceased; the guests were gone. Yet still one voice
Was there—the fountain's; through those eastern courts,
O'er the broken marble and the grass,
Its low clear music shedding mournfully.

And still another voice! An agèd man,—
Yet with a dark and fervent eye beneath
His silvery hair, came day by day, and sate
On a white column's fragment: and drew forth,
From the forsaken walls and dim arcades,
A tone that shook them with its answering thrill,
To his deep accents. Many a glorious tale
He told that sad yet stately solitude,
Pouring his memory's fulness o'er its gloom,
Like waters in the waste: and calling up,
By song or high recital of their deeds,
Bright solemn shadows of its vanished race
To people their own halls. with these alone,
In all this rich and breathing world, his thoughts

Held still unbroken converse. He had been
Reared in this lordly dwelling, and was now
The ivy of its ruins, unto which
His fading life seemed bound. Day rolled on day,
And from that scene the loneliness was fled ;
For crowds around the gray-haired chronicler
Met as men meet, within whose anxious hearts
Fear with deep feeling strives ; till, as a breeze
Wanders through forest branches, and is met
By one quick sound and shiver of the leaves,
The spirit of his passionate lament,
As through their stricken souls it passed, awoke
One echoing murmur. But this might not be
Under a despot's rule, and, summoned thence,
The dreamer stood before the Caliph's throne:
Sentenced to death he stood, and deeply pale,
And with his white lips rigidly compressed ;
Till, in submissive tones, he asked to speak
Once more, ere thrust from earth's fair sunshine forth.
Was it to sue for grace ? His burning heart
Sprang, with a sudden lightning, to his eye,
And he was changed !—and thus in rapid words,
The o'ermastering thoughts, more strong than death, found way :—

"And shall I not rejoice to go, when the noble and the brave,
With the glory on their brows, are gone before me to the grave ?
What is there left to look on now, what brightness in the land ?
I hold in scorn the faded world, that wants their princely band !

"My chiefs ! my chiefs ! the old man comes that in your halls was nursed—
That followed you to many a fight, where flashed your sabres first—
That bore your children in his arms, your name upon his heart :—
Oh ! must the music of that name with him from earth depart ?

"It shall not be ! A thousand tongues, though human voice were still,
With that high sound the living air triumphantly shall fill ;
The wind's free flight shall bear it on as wandering seeds are sown,
And the starry midnight whisper it, with a deep and thrilling tone.

"For it is not as a flower whose scent with the drooping leaves expires,
And it is not as a household lamp, that a breath should quench its fires ;
It is written on our battle-field with the writing of the sword,
It hath left upon our desert sands a light in blessings poured.

"The founts, the many gushing founts which to the wild ye gave,
Of you, my chiefs ! shall sing aloud, as they pour a joyous wave ;
And the groves, with whose deep lovely gloom ye hung the pilgrim's way,
Shall send from all their sighing leaves your praises on the day.

"The very walls your bounty reared for the stranger's homeless head,
Shall find a murmur to record your tale, my glorious dead !
Though the grass be where ye feasted once, where lute and cittern rung,
And the serpent in your palaces lie coiled amidst its young.

"It is enough! Mine eye no more of joy or splendor sees—
I leave your name in lofty faith to the skies and to the breeze!
I go, since earth her flower hath lost, to join the bright and fair,
And call the grave a kingly house, for ye, my chiefs! are there."

But while the old man sang, a mist of tears
O'er Haroun's eyes had gathered, and a thought—
Oh! many a sudden and remorseful thought—
Of his youth's once-loved friends, the martyred race,
O'erflowed his softening heart. "Live! live!" he cried,
"Thou faithful unto death! Live on, and still
Speak of thy lords—they *were* a princely band!"

THE SPANISH CHAPEL.[1]

"Weep not for those whom the vale of the tomb,
In life's early morning, hath hid from our eyes,
Ere sin threw a veil o'er the spirit's young bloom,
Or earth had profaned what was born for the skies."
MOORE.

I MADE a mountain brook my guide
Through a wild Spanish glen,
And wandered on its grassy side,
Far from the homes of honest men.

It lured me with a singing tone,
And many a sunny glance,
To a green spot of beauty lone—
A haunt for old romance.

A dim and deeply bosomed grove
Of many an aged tree,
Such as the shadowy violets love,
The fawn and forest bee.

The darkness of the chestnut-bough
There on the waters lay,
The bright stream reverently below
Checked its exulting play;

And bore a music all subdued,
And led a silvery sheen
On through the breathing solitude
Of that rich leafy scene.

For something viewlessly around
Of solemn influence dwelt,
In the soft gloom and whispery sound
Not to be told, but felt;

While sending forth a quiet gleam
Across the wood's repose,
And o'er the twilight of the stream,
A lowly chapel rose.

A pathway to that still retreat
Through many a myrtle wound,
And there a sight—how strangely sweet
My steps in wonder bound.

For on a brilliant bed of flowers,
E'en at the threshold made,
As if to sleep through sultry hours,
A young fair child was laid.

To sleep?—oh! ne'er on childhood's eye
And silken lashes pressed,
Did the warm *living* slumber lie
With such a weight of rest!

Yet still a tender crimson glow
Its cheeks' pure marble died—
'Twas but the light's faint streaming flow
Through roses heaped beside.

I stooped—the smooth round arm was chill,
The soft lips' breath was fled,
And the bright ringlets hung so still—
The lovely child was dead!

[1] Suggested by a scene beautifully described in the *Recollections of the Peninsula.*

"Alas!" I cried, "fair faded thing
Thou hast wrung bitter tears,
And thou hast left a woe, to cling
Round yearning hearts for years!"

But then a voice came sweet and low—
I turned, and near me sate
A woman with a mourner's brow,
Pale, yet not desolate.

And in her still, clear, matron face,
All solemnly serene,
A shadowed image I could trace
Of that young slumberer's mien.

"Stranger! thou pitiest me," she said
With lips that faintly smiled,
"As here I watch beside my dead,
My fair and precious child.

"But know, the time-worn heart may be
By pangs in this world riven,
Keener than theirs who yield, like me,
An angel thus to heaven!"

THE KAISER'S FEAST.

[Louis, Emperor of Germany, having put his brother, the Palsgrave Rodolphus, under the ban of the Empire in the twelfth century, that unfortunate prince fled to England, where he died in neglect and poverty. "After his decease, his mother Matilda privately invited his children to return to Germany; and by her mediation, during a season of festivity, when Louis kept wassail in the castle of Heidelberg, the family of his brother presented themselves before him in the garb of suppliants imploring pity and forgiveness. To this appeal the victor softened."—Miss Benger's *Memoirs of the Queen of Bohemia.*]

The Kaiser feasted in his hall—
The red wine mantled high;
Banners were trembling on the wall
To the peals of minstrelsy:
And many a gleam and sparkle came
From the armor hung around,
As it caught the glance of the torch's flame,
Or the hearth with pine-boughs crowned.

Why fell there silence on the chord
Beneath the harper's hand?
And suddenly from that rich board,
Why rose the wassail band?
The strings were hushed—the knights made way
For the queenly mother's tread,
As up the hall, in dark array,
Two fair-haired boys she led.

She led them e'en to the Kaiser's place,
And still before him stood;
Till, with strange wonder, o'er his face
Flushed the proud warrior blood:
And "Speak, my mother! speak!" he cried,
"Wherefore this mourning vest:
And the clinging children by thy side,
In weeds of sadness drest!"

"Well may a mourning vest be mine,
And theirs, my son, my son!
Look on the features of thy line
In each fair little one!
Though grief awhile within their eyes
Hath tamed the dancing glee,
Yet there thine own quick spirit lies—
Thy brother's children see!

"And where is he, thy brother—where?
He in thy home that grew,
And smiling with his sunny hair,
Ever to greet thee flew?
How would his arms thy neck entwine,
His fond lips press thy brow!
My son! oh, call these orphans thine!—
Thou hast no brother now!

"What! from their gentle eyes doth naught
Speak of thy childhood's hours,
And smite thee with a tender thought
Of thy dead father's towers?
Kind was thy boyish heart and true,
When reared together there,
Through the old woods like fawns ye flew—
Where is thy brother—where?

"Well didst thou love him then, and he
Still at thy side was seen!
How is it that such things can be
As though they ne'er had been?
Evil was this world's breath, which came
Between the good and brave!
Now must the tears of grief and shame
Be offered to the grave.

"And let them, let them there be poured!
Though all unfelt below—
Thine own wrung heart, to love restored,
Shall soften as they flow.
Oh! death is mighty to make peace;
Now bid his work be done!
So many an inward strife shall cease—
Take, take these babes, my son!"

His eye was dimmed—the strong man shook
With feelings long suppressed;
Up in his arms the boys he took,
And strained them to his breast.
And a shout from all the royal hall
Burst forth to hail the sight;
And eyes were wet midst the brave that met
At the Kaiser's feast that night.

TASSO AND HIS SISTER.

"Devant vous est Sorrente; là démeuroit la sœur de Tasse, quand il vint en pélérin demander à cette obscure amie un asyle contre l'injustice des princes.—Ses longues douleurs avaient presque egaré sa raison; il ne lui restoit plus que son génie."—*Corinne.*

She sat, where on each wind that sighed
The citron's breath went by,
While the red gold of eventide
Burned in the Italian sky.
Her bower was one where daylight's close
Full oft sweet laughter found,
As thence the voice of childhood rose
To the high vineyards round.

But still and thoughtful at her knee
Her children stood that hour,
Their bursts of song and dancing glee
Hushed as by words of power.
With bright fixed wondering eyes, that gazed
Up to their mother's face,
With brows through parted ringlet raised,
They stood in silent grace.

While she—yet something o'er her look
Of mournfulness was spread—
Forth from a poet's magic book
The glorious numbers read;
The proud undying lay, which poured
Its light on evil years;
His of the gifted pen and sword,[1]
The triumph, and the tears.

She read of fair Erminia's flight,
Which Venice once might hear
Sung on her glittering seas at night
By many a gondolier.
Of him she read, who broke the charm
That wrapt the myrtle grove;
Of Godfrey's deeds, of Tancred's arm,
That slew his Paynim love.

[1] It is scarcely necessary to recall the well-known Italian saying, that Tasso, with his sword and pen, was superior to all men.

Young cheeks around that bright page glowed,
Young holy hearts were stirred ;
And the meek tears of woman flowed
Fast o'er each burning word.
And sounds of breeze, and fount, and leaf,
Came sweet, each pause between,
When a strange voice of sudden grief
Burst on the gentle scene.

The mother turned—a wayworn man,
In pilgrim garb, stood nigh,
Of stately mien, yet wild and wan,
Of proud yet mournful eye.
But drops which would not stay for pride
From that dark eye gushed free,
As pressing his pale brow, he cried,
"Forgotten ! e'en by thee !

"Am I so changed ?—and yet we two
Oft hand in hand have played ;
This brow hath been all bathed in dew
From wreaths which thou hast made.
We have knelt down and said one prayer,
And sung one vesper strain :
My soul is dim with clouds of care—
Tell me those words again !

"Life hath been heavy on my head—
I come a stricken deer,
Bearing the heart, midst crowds that bled,
To bleed in stillness here."
She gazed, till thoughts that long had slept
Shook all her thrilling frame—
She fell upon his neck and wept,
Murmuring her brother's name.

Her *brother's* name !—and who was he,
The weary one, the unknown,
That came the bitter world to flee,
A stranger to his own ?
He was the bard of gifts divine
To sway the souls of men ;
He of the song for Salem's shrine,
He of the sword and pen !

THE RELEASE OF TASSO.

THERE came a bard to Rome ; he brought a lyre
Of sounds to peal through Rome's triumphant sky,
To mourn a hero on his funeral pyre,
Or greet a conqueror with its war-notes high ;
For on each chord had fallen the gift of fire,
The living breath of Power and Victory,—
Yet he, its lord, the sovereign city's guest,
Sighed but to flee away and be at rest.

He brought a spirit whose ethereal birth
Was of the loftiest, and whose haunts had been
Amidst the marvels and the pomps of earth,
Wild fairy bowers, and groves of deathless green,
And fields where mail-clad bosoms prove their worth,
When flashing swords light up the stormy scene :
He brought a weary heart, a wasted frame,—
The Child of Visions from a dungeon came.

On the blue waters, as in joy they sweep,
With starlight floating o'er their swells and falls—

On the blue waters of the Adrian deep
His numbers had been sung ; and in the halls,
Where, through rich foliage if a sunbeam peep,
It seems Heaven's wakening to the sculptured walls,
Had princes listened to those lofty strains,
While the high soul they burst from pined in chains.

And in the summer gardens, where the spray
Of founts, far glancing from their marble bed,
Rains on the flowering myrtles in its play,
And the sweet limes, and glassy leaves that spread
Round the deep golden citrons, o'er his lay
Dark eyes, dark soft Italian eyes, had shed
Warm tears, fast glittering in that sun whose light
Was a forbidden glory to his sight.

Oh ! if it be that wizard sign, and spell,
And talisman, had power of old to bind,
In the dark chambers of some cavern-cell,
Or knotted oak, the spirits of the wind,
Things of the lightning-pinion, wont to dwell
High o'er the reach of eagles, and to find
Joy in the rush of storms,—even such a doom
Was that high minstrel's in his dungeon-gloom.

But he was free at last !—the glorious land
Of the white Alps and pine-crowned Apennines,
Along whose shore the sapphire seas expand,
And the wastes teem with myrtle, and the shrines
Of long-forgotten Gods from Nature's hand
Receive bright offerings still—with all its vines,
And rocks, and ruins, clear before him lay ;—
The seal was taken from the founts of day.

The winds came over his cheek—the soft winds, blending
All summer sounds and odors in their sigh ;
The orange-groves waved round ; the hills were sending
Their bright streams down ; the free birds darting by,
And the blue festal heavens above him bending,
As if to fold a world where none could die.
And who was he that looked upon these things ?
-If but of earth, yet one whose thoughts were wings.

To bear him o'er creation ; and whose mind
Was an air harp, awakening to the sway
Of sunny Nature's breathings unconfined,
With all the mystic harmonies that lay
Far in the slumber of its chords enshrined,
Till the light breeze went thrilling on its way.
—There was no sound that wandered through the sky
But told him secrets in his melody.

Was the deep forest lonely unto him,
With all its whispering leaves ? Each dell and glade

Teemed with such forms as on the moss-clad brim
Of fountains, in their sparry grottoes, played.
Seen by the Greek of yore through twilight dim,
Or misty noontide in the laurel shade.
—There is no solitude on earth so deep
As that where man decrees that man should weep!

But oh! the life in Nature's green domains,
The breathing sense of joy! where flowers are springing
By starry thousands on the slopes and plains,
And the gray rocks—and all the arched woods ringing,
And the young branches trembling to the strains
Of wild-born creatures, through the sunshine winging
Their fearless flight,—and sylvan echoes round,
Mingling all tones to one Æolian sound.

And the glad voice, the laughing voice of streams,
And the low cadence of the silvery sea,
And reed-notes from the mountains, and the beams
Of the warm sun—all these are for the free!
And they were his once more, the bard whose dream
Their spirit still have haunted. Could it be
That he had borne the chain? Oh! who shall dare
To say how much Man's heart uncrushed may bear?

So deep a root hath hope! but woe for this
Our frail mortality, that aught so bright,
So almost burthened with excess of bliss,
As the rich hour which back to summer's light
Calls the worn captive, with the gentle kiss
Of winds, and gush of waters, and the sight
Of the green earth, must so be bought with years
Of the heart's fever, parching up its tears,

And feeding, a slow fire, on all its powers,
Until the boon for which we gasp in vain,
If hardly won at length, too late made ours,
When the soul's wing is broken, comes like rain
Withheld till evening, on the stately flowers
Which withered in the noontide, ne'er again
To lift their heads in glory. So doth Earth
Breathe on her gifts, and melt away their worth.

The sailor dies in sight of that green shore,
Whose fields, in slumbering beauty, seemed to lie
On the deep's foam, amidst its hollow roar
Called up to sunlight by his fantasy.
And when the shining desert-mists that wore
The lake's bright semblance, have been all passed by,
The pilgrim sinks beside the fountain wave,
Which dashes from its rock, too late to save.

Or if we live, if that too dearly bought,
And made too precious by long hopes and fears,

Remain our own—love, darkened and o'erwrought
By memory of privation—love, which wears
And casts o'er life a troubled hue of thought,
Becomes the shadow of our closing years,
Making it almost misery to possess
Aught watched with such unquiet tenderness.

Such unto him, the Bard, the worn and wild,
And sick with hope deferred, from whom the sky,
With all its clouds in burning glory piled,
Had been shut out by long captivity.
Such freedom was to Tasso. As a child
Is to the mother, whose foreboding eye
In its too radiant glance from day to day,
Reads that which calls the brightest first away.

And he became a wanderer—in whose breast
Wild fear which, e'en when every sense doth sleep,
Clings to the burning heart, a wakeful guest,
Sat brooding as a spirit, raised to keep
Its gloomy vigil of intense unrest
O'er treasures burthening life, and buried deep
In cavern-tomb, and sought through shades and stealth,
By some pale mortal, trembling at his wealth.

But woe for those who trample o'er a mind !
A deathless thing ! They know not what they do,
Nor what they deal with. Man perchance may bind
The flower his step hath bruised ; or light anew
The torch he quenches ; or to music wind
Again the lyre-string from his touch that flew :—
But for the soul !—oh ! tremble, and beware
To lay rude hands upon God's mysteries *there!*

For blindness wraps that world—our torch may turn
Some balance fearfully and darkly hung ;
Or put out some bright spark whose ray should burn
To point the way a thousand rocks among ;
Or break some subtle chain which none discern,
Though binding down the terrible, the strong,
The o'ersweeping passions, which to loose on life
Is to set free the elements for strife.

Who then to power and glory shall restore
That which our evil rashness hath undone !
Who unto mystic harmony once more
Attune those viewless chords ?—There is but One !
He that through dust the stream of life can pour,
The Mighty and the Merciful alone.
—Yet oft His paths have midnight for their shade—
He leaves to Man the ruin Man hath made.

THE NECROMANCER.

"Shall I make spirits fetch me what I please?
Resolve me of all ambiguities?
Perform what desperate enterprises I will?
I'll have them fly to India for gold,
Ransack the ocean for orient pearl,
And search all corners of the New-found World
For pleasant fruits and princely delicates."

MARLOW'S *Faustus.*

AN old man on his deathbed lay, an old yet stately man;
His lip seemed moulded for command, though quivering now, and wan;
By fits a wild and wandering fire shot from his troubled eye,
But his pale brow still austerely wore its native mastery.

There were gorgeous things from lands afar, strewn round the mystic room
From where the orient palm-trees wave, bright gem and dazzling plume;
And vases with rich odor filled, that o'er the couch of death
Shed forth, like groves from Indian isles, a spicy summer's breath.

And sculptured forms of olden time, in their strange beauty white,
Stood round the chamber solemnly, robed as in ghostly light;
All passionless and still they stood, and shining through the gloom,
Like watchers of another world, stern angels of the tomb.

'Twas silent as a midnight church, that dim and mystic place,
While shadows cast from many thoughts o'erswept the old man's face.
He spoke at last, and low and deep, yet piercing was the tone,
To one that o'er him long had watched, in reverence and alone.

"I leave," he said, "an empire dread, by mount, and shore, and sea,
Wider than Roman Eagle's wing e'er traversed proudly free;
Never did King or Kaiser yet such high dominion boast,
Or Soldan of the sunbeam's clime, girt with a conquering host.

"They hear me—*they* that dwell far down where the sea-serpent lies
And they, the unseen, on Afric's hills that sport when tempests rise:
And they that rest in central caves, whence fiery streams make way,
My lightest whisper shakes their sleep, they hear me, and obey.

"They come to me with ancient wealth—with crown and cup of gold,
From cities roofed with ocean-waves, that buried them of old;
They come from Earth's most hidden veins, which man shall never find,
With gems that have the hues of fire deep at their heart enshrined.

"But a mightier power is on me now—it rules my struggling breath;
I have swayed the rushing elements—but still and strong is Death,
I quit my throne, yet leave I not my vassal-spirits free—
Thou hast brave and high aspirants, youth!—my Sceptre is for thee!

"Now listen! I will teach thee words whose mastery shall compel
The viewless ones to do thy work, in wave, or blood, or hell!
But never, never mayst thou breathe those words in human ear,
Until thou'rt laid, as I am now, the grave's dark portals near."

His voice in faintness died away,—and a sudden flush was seen,
A mantling of the rapid blood o'er the youth's impassioned mien—

A mantling and a fading swift, a look with sadness fraught ;
And that too passed—and boldly then rushed forth the ardent thought.

"Must those high words of sovereignty ne'er sound in human ear ?
I have a friend—a noble friend—as life our freedom dear !
Thou offerest me a glorious gift—a proud majestic throne,
But I know the secrets of *his* heart—and shall I seal mine own ?

"And there is one that loves me well, with yet a gentle love—
Oh ! is not *her* full, boundless faith, all power, all wealth above ?
Must a deep gulf between the souls, now closely linked, be set ?
Keep, keep the Sceptre !—leave me free, and loved and trustful yet !"

Then from the old man's haughty lips was heard the sad reply—
"Well hast thou chosen !—I blame thee not—I that unwept must die.
Live thou, beloved and trustful yet !—No more on human head
Be the sorrows of unworthy gifts from bitter vials shed !"

ULLA ; OR THE ADJURATION.

"Yet speak to me ! I have outwatched the stars,
And gazed o'er heaven in vain, in search of thee.
Speak to me ! I have wandered o'er the earth,
And never found thy likeness. Speak to me !
This once—once more !"—*Manfred.*

"Thou'rt gone !—thou'rt slumbering low,
With the sounding seas above thee ;
It is but a restless woe,
But a haunting dream to love thee !
Thrice the glad swan has sung
To greet the spring-time hours,
Since thine oar at parting flung
The white spray up in showers.

There's a shadow of the grave on thy hearth and round thy home :
Come to me from the ocean's dead !—thou art surely of them—come !"

'Twas Ulla's voice ! Alone she stood
In the Iceland summer night,
Far gazing o'er a glassy flood
From a dark rock's beetling height.

"I know thou hast thy bed
Where the sea-weed's coil hath bound thee ;
The storm sweeps o'er thy head,
But the depths are hushed around thee.

What wind shall point the way
To the chambers where thou'rt lying ?
Come to me thence, and say
If thou thought'st on me in dying.

I will not shrink to see thee with a bloodless lip and cheek.
Come to me from the ocean's dead !—thou'rt surely of them—speak !"

She listened—'twas the wind's low moan,
'Twas the ripple of the wave,
'Twas the wakening osprey's cry alone
As it startled from its cave.

"I know each fearful spell
Of the ancient Runic lay,
Whose muttered words compel
The tempest to obey.
But I adjure not *thee*
By magic sign or song ;
My voice shall stir the sea
By love—the deep, the strong

By the might of woman's tears, by the passion of her sighs,
Come to me from the ocean's dead !—by the vows we pledged—arise !

Again she gazed with an eager glance,
Wandering and wildly bright !—
She saw but the sparkling waters dance
To the arrowy northern light.

"By the slow and struggling death
Of hope that loathed to part,
By the fierce and withering breath
Of despair on youth's high heart—
By the weight of gloom which clings
To the mantle of the night,
By the heavy dawn which brings
Naught lovely to the sight—

By all that from my weary soul thou hast wrung of grief and fear,
Come to me from the ocean's dead ! Awake, arise, appear !"

Was it her yearning spirit's dream ?
Or did a pale form rise,
And o'er the hushed wave glide and gleam,
With bright, still, mournful eyes ?

"Have the depths heard ? They have !
My voice prevails—thou'rt there,
Dim from thy watery grave—
O thou that wert so fair !

Yet take me to thy rest !
There dwells no fear with love ;
Let me slumber on thy breast,
While the billow rolls above !

Where the long-lost things lie hid, where the bright ones have their home,
We will sleep among the ocean's dead. Stay for me, stay !—I come !"

There was a sullen plunge below,
A flashing on the main ;
And the wave shut o'er that wild heart's woe—
Shut, and grew still again.

TO WORDSWORTH.

THINE is a strain to read among the hills,
The old and full of voices,—by the source
Of some free stream, whose gladdening presence fills
The solitude with sound ; for in its course
Even such is thy deep song, that seems a part
Of those high scenes, a fountain from their heart.

Or its calm spirit fitly may be taken
To the still breast in sunny garden bowers,
Where vernal winds each tree's low tones awaken,
And bud and bell with changes mark the hours.
There let thy thoughts be with me, while the day
Sinks with a golden and serene decay.

Or by some hearth where happy faces meet,
When night hath hushed the woods, with all their birds,
There, from some gentle voice, that lay were sweet
As antique music, linked with household words ;
While in pleased murmurs woman's lip might move,
And the raised eye of childhood shine in love.

Or where the shadows of dark solemn yews
Brood silently o'er some lone burial-ground,
Thy verse hath power that brightly might diffuse
A breath, a kindling, as of spring, around ;
From its own glow of hope and courage high,
And steadfast faith's victorious constancy.

True bard and holy !—thou art e'en as one
Who, by some secret gift of soul or eye,
In every spot beneath the smiling sun,
Sees where the springs of living waters lie :
Unseen awhile they sleep—till, touched by thee,
Bright healthful waves flow forth, to each glad wanderer free.

A MONARCH'S DEATHBED.

[The Emperor Albert of Hapsburg, who was assassinated by his nephew, afterwards called John the Parricide, was left to die by the wayside, and only supported in his last moments by a female peasant, who happened to be passing.]

A MONARCH on his deathbed lay—
Did censers waft perfume,
And soft lamps poured their silvery ray,
Through his proud chamber's gloom ?
He lay upon a greensward bed,
Beneath a darkening sky—
A lone tree waving o'er his head,
A swift stream rolling by.

Had he then fallen as warriors fall,
Where spear strikes fire with spear ?
Was there a banner for his pall,
A buckler for his bier ?
Not so—nor cloven shields nor helms
Had strewn the bloody sod,
Where he, the helpless lord of realms,
Yielded his soul to God.

Were there not friends with words of cheer,
And princely vassals nigh?
And priests, the crucifix to rear
Before the glazing eye?
A peasant girl that royal head
Upon her bosom laid,
And, shrinking not for woman's dread,
The face of death surveyed.

Alone she sat: from hill and wood
Red sank the mournful sun;
Fast gushed the fount of noble blood—
Treason its worst had done.
With her long hair she vainly pressed
The wounds, to stanch their tide—
Unknown, on that meek humble breast,
Imperial Albert died!

TO THE MEMORY OF HEBER.

"Umile in tanta gloria."—PETRARCH.

If it be sad to speak of treasures gone,
Of sainted genius called too soon away,
Of light from this world taken, while it shone
Yet kindling onward to the perfect day—
How shall our grief, if mournful these things be,
Flow forth, O thou of many gifts! for thee?

Hath not thy voice been here amongst us heard?
And that deep soul of gentleness and power,
Have we not felt its breath in every word
Wont from thy lips as Hermon's dew to shower?
Yes! in our hearts thy fervent thoughts have burned—
Of heaven they were, and thither have returned.

How shall we mourn thee? With a lofty trust,
Our life's immortal birthright from above!
With a glad faith, whose eye, to track the just,
Through shades and mysteries lifts a glance of love,
And yet can weep!—for nature thus deplores
The friend that leaves us, though for happier shores.

And one high tone of triumph o'er thy bier,
One strain of solemn rapture, be allowed!
Thou, that rejoicing on thy mid career,
Not to decay, but unto death hast bowed,
In those bright regions of the rising sun,
Where victory ne'er a crown like thine had won.

Praise! for yet one more name with power endowed
To cheer and guide us, onward as we press;
Yet one more image on the heart bestowed
To dwell there, beautiful in holiness!
Thine, Heber, thine! whose memory from the dead
Shines as the star which to the Saviour led!

THE ADOPTED CHILD.

"Why wouldst thou leave me, O gentle child?
Thy home on the mountain is bleak and wild,
A straw-roofed cabin, with lowly wall—
Mine is a fair and pillared hall,
Where many an image of marble gleams,
And the sunshine of picture forever streams."

"Oh! green is the turf where my brothers play,
Through the long bright hours of the summer day;
They find the red cup-moss where they climb,
And they chase the bee o'er the scented thyme,
And the rocks where the heath-flower blooms they know—
Lady, kind lady! oh, let me go!"

"Content thee, boy! in my bower to dwell—
Here are sweet sounds which thou lovest well;
Flutes on the air in the stilly noon,
Harps which the wandering breezes tune,
And the silvery wood-note of many a bird
Whose voice was ne'er in thy mountains heard."

"Oh! my mother sings at the twilight's fall,
A song of the hills far more sweet than all;
She sings it under her own green tree,
To the babe half slumbering on her knee;
I dreamt last night of that music low—
Lady, kind lady! oh, let me go!"

"Thy mother is gone, from her cares to rest—
She hath taken the babe on her quiet breast;
Thou wouldst meet her footstep, my boy! no more,
Nor hear the song at the cabin door.
Come thou with me to the vineyard nigh,
And we'll pluck the grapes of the richest dye."

"Is my mother gone from her home away?
But I know that my brothers are there at play—
I know they are gathering the foxglove's bell
Or the long fern-leaves by the sparkling well;
Or they launch their boats where the bright streams flow—
Lady, kind lady! oh, let me go!"

"Fair child! thy brothers are wanderers now,
They sport no more on the mountain's brow;
They have left the fern by the spring's green side,
And the streams where the fairy barks were tried.
Be thou at peace in thy brighter lot,
For thy cabin home is a lonely spot."

"Are they gone, all gone from the sunny hill?—
But the bird and the blue-fly rove o'er it still;
And the red-deer bound in their gladness free,
And the heath is bent by the singing bee,
And the waters leap, and the fresh winds blow—
Lady, kind lady! oh, let me go!"

INVOCATION.

"I called on dreams and visions, to disclose
That which is veiled from waking thought; conjured
Eternity, as men constrain a ghost
To appear and answer."—WORDSWORTH.

ANSWER me, burning stars of night!
Where is the spirit gone,
That past the reach of human sight
As a swift breeze hath flown?
And the stars answered me—"We roll
In light and power on high;
But, of the never-dying soul,
Ask that which cannot die."

O many-toned and chainless wind!
Thou art a wanderer free;
Tell me if thou its place canst find,
Far over mount and sea?
And the wind murmured in reply—
"The blue deep I have crossed,
And met its barks and billows high
But not what thou hast lost."

Ye clouds that gorgeously repose
Around the setting sun,
Answer! have ye a home for those
Whose earthly race is run?
The bright clouds answered—"We depart,
We vanish from the sky;
Ask what is deathless in thy heart,
For that which cannot die."

Speak, then, thou voice of God within,
Thou of the deep low tone!
Answer me, through life's restless din—
Where is the spirit flown?
And the voice answered—"Be thou still!
Enough to know is given!
Clouds, winds, and stars *their* part fulfil—
Thine is, to trust in Heaven."

KÖRNER AND HIS SISTER.

["Charles Theodore Körner, the celebrated young German poet and soldier, was killed in a skirmish with a detachment of French troops on the 20th of August, 1813, a few hours after the composition of his popular piece, *The Sword Song*. He was buried at the village of Wöbbelin in Mecklenburg, under a beautiful oak, in a recess of which he had frequently deposited verses composed by him while campaigning in its vicinity. The monument erected to his memory is of cast-iron; and the upper part is wrought into a lyre and sword, a favorite emblem of Körner's, from which one of his works had been entitled. Near the grave of the poet is that of his only sister, who died of grief for his loss, having only survived him long enough to complete his portrait and a drawing of his burial-place. Over the gate of the cemetery is engraved one of his own lines] :—

'Vergiss die treuen Tödten nicht.'
(Forget not the faithful dead.)"

—*See* RICHARDSON'S *Translation of Körner's Life and Works, and* DOWNE'S *Letters from Mecklenburg.*]

GREEN wave the oak forever o'er thy rest,
Thou that beneath its crowning foliage sleepest,
And, in the stillness of thy country's breast,
Thy place of memory as an altar keepest;
Brightly thy spirit o'er her hills were poured,
Thou of the Lyre and Sword!

Rest, bard! rest, soldier! By the father's hand
Here shall the child of after years be led,
With his wreath-offering silently to stand

In the hushed presence of the glorious dead—
Soldier and bard! for thou thy path hast trod
With freedom and with God.

The oak waved proudly o'er thy burial rite,
On thy crowned bier to slumber warriors bore thee,
And with true hearts thy brethren of the fight
Wept as they veiled their drooping banners o'er thee;
And the deep guns with rolling peal gave token
That Lyre and Sword were broken.

Thou hast a hero's tomb: a lowlier bed
Is hers, the gentle girl beside thee lying—
The gentle girl that bowed her fair young head
When thou wert gone, in silent sorrow dying.
Brother, true friend! the tender and the brave!—
She pined to share thy grave.

Fame was thy gift from others;—but for *her*,
To whom the wide world held that only spot,
She loved thee!—lovely in your lives ye were,
And in your early deaths divided not.
Thou hast thine oak, thy trophy,—what hath she?
Her own blessed place by thee!

It was thy spirit, brother! which had made
The bright earth glorious to her youthful eye,
Since first in childhood midst the vines ye played,
And sent glad singing through the free blue sky
Ye were but two—and when the spirit passed,
Woe to the one, the last!

Woe, yet not long! She lingered but to trace
Thine image from the image of her breast—
Once, once again to see that buried face
But smile upon her, ere she went to rest.
Too sad a smile! its living light was o'er—
It answered hers no more.

The earth grew silent when thy voice departed,
The home too lonely whence thy step had fled;
What then was left for her the faithful-hearted?
Death, death, to still the yearning for the dead!
Softly she perished: be the flower deplored
Here with the Lyre and the Sword!

Have ye not met ere now!—so let those trust
That meet for moments but to part for years—
That weep, watch, pray, to hold back dust from dust—
That love, where love is but a fount of tears.
Brother! sweet sister! peace around ye dwell:
Lyre, Sword, and Flower, farewell![1]

[1] The following lines, addressed to the author of the above by the venerable father of Körner, who, with the mother survived the "Lyre, Sword, and Flower," here commemorated, may not be uninteresting to the German reader:—

THE DEATH-DAY OF KÖRNER.[1]

A song for the death-day of the brave—
A song of pride!
The youth went down to a hero's grave,
With the sword, his bride.[2]

He went with his noble heart unworn,
And pure, and high—
An eagle stooping from clouds of morn,
Only to die.

He went with lyre whose lofty tone
Beneath his hand
Had thrilled to the name of his God alone
And his fatherland.

And with all his glorious feelings yet
In their first glow,
Like a southern stream that no frost hath met
To chain its flow.

A song for the death-day of the brave—
A song of pride!
For him that went to a hero's grave,
With the sword, his bride.

He hath left a voice in his trumpet lays
To turn the flight,
And a guiding spirit for after days,
Like a watch-fire's light.

And a grief in his father's soul to rest,
Midst all high thought;
And a memory unto his mother's breast,
With healing fraught.

And a name and fame above the blight
Of earthly breath,
Beautiful—beautiful and bright,
In life and death!

A song for the death-day of the brave—
A song of pride!
For him that went to a hero's grave,
With the sword, his bride!

AN HOUR OF ROMANCE.

"I come
To this sweet place for quiet. Every tree
And bush, and fragrant flower, and hilly path,
And thymy mound that flings unto the winds
Its morning incense, is my friend."—Barry Cornwall.

There were thick leaves above me and around,
And low sweet sighs like those of childhood's sleep,
Amidst their dimness, and a fitful sound
As of soft showers on water; dark and deep

Wohllaut tönt aus der Ferne von freundlichen Lüften getragen,
Schmeichelt mit lindernder Kraft sich in der Trauernden Ohr,
Stärkt den erhebenden Glauben an solcher seelen Verwandschaft,
Die zum Tempel die brust nur für das Würdige weihn.
Aus dem Lande zu dem sich stets der gefeyerte Jungling
Hingezogen gefühlt, wird ihm ein gläzender Lohn.
Heil dem Brittischen Volke, wenn ihm das Deutsche nicht fremd ist!
Über Länder und Meer reichen sich beyde die Hand.

Theodor Körner's Vater.

[1] On reading part of a letter from Körner's father, addressed to Mr. Richardson, the translator of his works, in which he speaks of "The Death-day of his son."

[2] See *The Sword Song*, composed on the morning of his death.

Lay the oak shadows o'er the turf, so still
They seemed but pictured glooms ; a hidden rill
Made music, such as haunts us in a dream,
Under the fern-tufts ; and a tender gleam
Of a soft green light, as by the glow-worm shed,
Came pouring through the woven beech-boughs down
And steeped the magic page wherein I read
Of royal chivalry and old renown,
A tale of Palestine.[1] Meanwhile the bee
Swept past me with a tone of summer hours—
A drowsy bugle, wafting thoughts of flowers,
Blue skies, and amber sunshine : brightly free,
On filmy wings, the purple dragon-fly
Shot glancing like a fairy javelin by ;
And a sweet voice of sorrow told the dell
Where sat the lone wood-pigeon.

But ere long,
All sense of these things faded, as the spell
Breathing from that high gorgeous tale grew strong
On my chained soul. 'Twas not the leaves I heard ;—
A Syrian wind the lion-banner stirred,
Through its proud floating folds. 'Twas not the brook
Singing in secret through its glassy glen ;—
A wild shrill trumpet of the Saracen
Pealed from the desert's lonely heart, and shook
The burning air. Like clouds when winds are high,
O'er glittering sands flew steeds of Araby,
And tents rose up, and sudden lance and spear
Flashed where a fountain's diamond wave lay clear,
Shadowed by graceful palm-trees. Then the shout
Of merry England's joy swelled freely out,
Sent through an eastern heaven, whose glorious hue
Made shields dark mirrors to its depths of blue :
And harps were there—I heard their sounding strings
As the waste echoed to the mirth of kings.
The bright mask faded. Unto life's worn track,
What called me from its flood of glory back ?
A voice of happy childhood !—and they passed,
Banner, and harp, and Paynim's trumpet's blast.
Yet might I scarce bewail the splendors gone,
My heart so leaped to that sweet laughter's tone.

A VOYAGER'S DREAM OF LAND.

"His very heart athirst
To gaze at nature in her green array,
Upon the ship's tall side he stands possessed
With visions prompted by intense desire ;
Fair fields appear below, such as he left
Far distant, such as he would die to find :
He seeks them headlong, and is seen no more."—COWPER.

THE hollow dash of waves !—the ceaseless roar !—
Silence, ye billows !—vex my soul no more.

[1] *The Talisman—Tale of the Crusaders.*

There's a spring in the woods by my sunny home,
Afar from the dark seas's tossing foam ;
Oh ! the fall of that fountain is sweet to hear,
As a song from the shore to the sailor's ear !
Through the feathery fern and the olive boughs,
And the gleam on its path as it steals away
Into deeper shades from the sultry day,
And the large water-lilies that o'er its bed
Their pearly leaves to the soft light spread,
They haunt me ! I dream of that bright spring's flow,
I thirst for its rills like a wounded roe !

Be still, thou sea-bird, with thy clanging cry,
My spirit sickens as thy wing sweeps by.

Know ye my home, with the lulling sound
Of leaves from the lime and the chestnut round ?
Know ye it, brethren ! where bowered it lies
Under the purple of southern skies?
With the streamy gold of the sun that shines
In through the cloud of its clustering vines,
And the summer breath of the myrtle flowers,
Borne from the mountain in dewy hours,
And the fire-fly's glance through the darkening shades,
Like shooting stars in the forest glades,
And the scent of the citron at eve's dim fall—
Speak ! have ye known, have ye felt them all?

The heavy rolling surge ! the rocking mast !—
Hush ! give my dream's deep music way, thou blast !

Oh, the glad sounds of the joyous earth !
The notes of the singing cicala's mirth,
The murmurs that live in the mountain pines,
The sighing of reeds as the day declines,
The wings flitting home through the crimson glow
That steeps the wood when the sun is low,
The voice of the night-bird that sends a thrill
To the heart of the leaves when the winds are still—
I hear them !—around me they rise, they swell,
They call back my spirit with Hope to dwell—
They come with a breath from the fresh spring-time,
And waken my youth in its hour of prime.

The white foam dashes high—away, away !
Shroud my green land no more, thou blinding spray !

It is there !—down the mountain I see the sweep
Of the chestnut forests, the rich and deep,
With the burden and glory of flowers they bear
Floating upborne on the blue summer air,
And the light pouring through them in tender gleams,
And the flashing forth of a thousand streams !
Hold me not, brethren ! I go, I go
To the hills of my youth, where the myrtles blow,

To the depths of the woods, where the shadows rest,
Massy and still, on the greensward's breast,
To the rocks that resound with the water's play—
I hear the sweet laugh of my fount—give way !

Give way !—the booming surge, the tempest's roar,
The sea-bird's wail shall vex my soul no more.

THE EFFIGIES.

"Der rasche Kampf verewigt einen Mann:
Er falle gleich, so preiset ihn das Lied.
Allein die Thränen, die unendlichen
Der überbliebnen, der verlass'nen Frau,
Zählt keine Nachwelt."—GOETHE.

WARRIOR ! whose image on thy tomb,
With shield and crested head,
Sleep soundly in the purple gloom
By the stained window shed ;
The records of thy name and race
Have faded from the stone,
Yet, through a cloud of years, I trace
What thou hast been and done.

A banner, from its flashing spear,
Flung out o'er many a fight ;
A war-cry ringing far and clear,
And strong to turn the flight ;
An arm that bravely bore the lance
On for the holy shrine ;
A haughty heart and a kingly glance—
Chief ! were not these things thine ?

A lofty place where leaders sate
Around the council board ;
In festal halls a chair of state
When the blood-red wine was poured :
A name that drew a prouder tone
From herald, harp, and bard :
Surely these things were all thine own—
So hadst thou thy reward.

Woman ! whose sculptured form at rest
By the armed knight is laid,
With meek hands folded o'er a breast
In matron robes arrayed ;
What was *thy* tale ?—O gentle mate
Of him, the bold and free,
Bound unto his victorious fate,
What bard hath sung of *thee ?*

He wooed a bright and burning star—
Thine was the void, the gloom,
The straining eye that followed far
His fast-receding plume ;
The heart-sick listening while his steed
Sent echoes on the breeze ;
The pang—but when did *Fame* take heed
Of griefs obscure as these ?

Thy silent and secluded hours
Through many a lonely day
While bending o'er thy broidered flowers,
With spirits far away ;
Thy weeping midnight prayers for him
Who fought on Syrian plains,
Thy watchings till the torch grew dim—
These fill no minstrel strains.

A still, sad life was thine !—long years
With tasks unguerdoned fraught—
Deep, quiet love, submissive tears,
Vigils of anxious thought ;
Prayer at the cross in fervor poured,
Alms to the pilgrim given—
Oh ! happy, happier than thy lord,
In that lone path to heaven !

THE LANDING OF THE PILGRIM FATHERS IN NEW ENGLAND.

"Look now abroad! Another race has filled
Those populous borders—wide the wood recedes,
And towns shoot up, and fertile realms are tilled;
The land is full of harvest and green meads.—BRYANT."

THE breaking waves dashed high
On a stern and rock-bound coast,
And the woods against a stormy sky
Their giant branches tossed;

And the heavy night hung dark
The hills and waters o'er,
When a band of exiles moored their bark
On the wild New England shore.

Not as the conqueror comes,
They, the true-hearted, came;
Not with the roll of the stirring drums,
And the trumpet that sings of fame;

Not as the flying come,
In silence and in fear;—
They shook the depths of the desert gloom
With their hymns of lofty cheer.

Amidst the storm they sang,
And the stars heard and the sea;
And the sounding aisles of the dim woods rang
To the anthem of the free!

The ocean eagle soared
From his nest by the white wave's foam;
And the rocking pines of the forest roared—
This was their welcome home!

There were men with hoary hair
Amidst that pilgrim band;—
Why had *they* come to wither there,
Away from their childhood's land?

There was woman's fearless eye,
Lit by her deep love's truth;
There was manhood's brow serenely high,
And the fiery heart of youth.

What sought they thus afar?—
Bright jewels of the mine?
The wealth of seas, the spoils of war?—
They sought a faith's pure shrine!

Ay, call it holy ground,
The soil where first they trode.
They have left unstained what there they found—
Freedom to worship God.

THE SPIRIT'S MYSTERIES.

"And slight, withal, may be the things which bring
Back on the heart the weight which it would fling
Aside forever;—it may be a sound—
A tone of music—summer's breath, or spring—
A flower—a leaf—the ocean—which may wound—
Striking the electric chain wherewith we are darkly bound."
Childe Harold.

THE power that dwelleth in sweet sounds to waken
Vague yearnings, like the sailor's for the shore,
And dim remembrances, whose hue seems taken
From some bright former state, our own no more;
Is not this all a mystery? Who shall say
Whence are those thoughts, and whither tends their way?

The sudden images of vanished things
That o'er the spirit flash, we know not why;

Tones from some broken harp's deserted strings,
Warm sunset hues of summers long gone by;
A rippling wave—the dashing of an oar—
A flower-scent floating past our parents' door;

A word—scarce noted in its hour perchance,
Yet back returning with a plaintive tone;
A smile—a sunny or a mournful glance,
Full of sweet meanings now from this world flown;
Are not these mysteries when to life they start,
And press vain tears in gushes from the heart?

And the far wanderings of the soul in dreams,
Calling up shrouded faces from the dead,
And with them bringing soft or solemn gleams,
Familiar objects brightly to o'erspread;
And wakening buried love, or joy, or fear—
These are night's mysteries—who shall make them clear?

And the strange inborn sense of coming ill,
That ofttimes whispers to the haunted breast,
In a low tone which naught can drown or still,
'Midst feasts and melodies a secret guest;
Whence doth that murmur wake, that shadow fall?
Why shakes the spirit thus? 'Tis mystery all!

Darkly we move—we press upon the brink
Haply of viewless worlds, and know it not;
Yes! it may be, that nearer than we think
Are those whom death has parted from our lot!
Fearfully, wondrously, our souls are made—
Let us walk humbly on, but undismayed!

Humbly—for knowledge strives in vain to feel
Her way amidst these marvels of the mind;
Yet undismayed—for do they not reveal
The immortal being with our dust entwined?
So let us deem! and e'en the tears they wake
Shall then be blest, for that high nature's sake.

THE DEPARTED.

"Thou shalt lie down
With patriarchs of the infant world—with kings,
The powerful of the earth—the wise—the good,
Fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past,
All in one mighty sepulchre."—BRYANT.

AND shrink ye from the way
To the spirit's distant shore?—
Earth's mightiest men, in armed array,
Are thither gone before.

The warrior-kings, whose banner
Flew far as eagles fly,
They are gone where swords avail them not,
From the feast of victory.

And the seers who sat of yore
By Orient palm or wave,
They have passed with all their starry lore—
Can *ye* still fear the grave?

We fear! we fear! the sunshine
Is joyous to behold,
And we reck not of the buried kings,
Nor the awful seers of old.

Ye shrink! the bards whose lays
Have made your deep hearts burn,
They have left the sun and the voice of praise,
For the land whence none return.

And the beautiful, whose record
Is the verse that cannot die,
They too are gone, with their glorious bloom,
From the love of human eye.

Could ye not join that throng
Of the earth's departed flowers,
And the masters of the mighty song
In their far and fadeless bowers?

Those songs are high and holy,
But they vanquish not our fear:
Not from *our* path these flowers are gone—
We fain would linger here!

Linger then yet awhile,
As the last leaves upon the bough!—
Ye have loved the light of many a smile
That is taken from you now.

There have been sweet singing voices
In your walks, that now are still;
There are seats left void in your earthly homes,
Which none again may fill.

Soft eyes are seen no more,
That made spring-time in your heart,
Kindred and friends are gone before—
And *ye* still fear to part?

We fear not now, we fear not!
Though the way through darkness bends;
Our souls are strong to follow *them*,
Our own familiar friends!

THE PALM TREE.[1]

It waved not through an eastern sky
Beside a fount of Araby;
It was not fanned by southern breeze
In some green Isle of Indian seas;
Nor did its graceful shadow sleep
O'er stream of Afric, lone and deep.

But fair the exiled palm-tree grew
'Midst foliage of no kindred hue;
Through the laburnum's drooping gold
Rose the light shaft of orient mould,
And Europe's violets, faintly sweet,
Purpled the moss-beds at its feet.

Strange looked it there! The willow streamed
Where silvery waters near it gleamed;
The lime-bough lured the honey-bee
To murmur by the desert's tree,
And showers of snowy roses made
A lustre in its fan-like shade.

There came an eve of festal hours—
Rich music filled that garden's bowers;
Lamps, that from flowering branches hung,
On sparks of dew soft color flung;
And bright forms glanced—a fairy show—
Under the blossoms to and fro.

But one, a lone one, 'midst the throng,
Seemed reckless all of dance or song:
He was a youth of dusky mien,
Whereon the Indian sun had been,
Of crested brow and long black hair—
A stranger, like the palm-tree there.

[1] This incident is, I think, recorded by De Lille, in his poem of *Les Jardins*.

And slowly, sadly, moved his plumes,
Glittering athwart the leafy glooms.
He passed the pale-green olives by,
Nor won the chestnut flowers his eye;
But when to that sole palm he came,
Then shot a rapture through his frame!

To him, to him its rustling spoke—
The silence of his soul it broke!
It whispered of his own bright isle,
That lit the ocean with a smile;
Ay to his ear that native tone
Had something of the sea-wave's moan!

His mother's cabin-home, that lay
Where feathery cocoas fringed the bay;
The dashing of his brethren's oar—
The conch-note heard along the shore;
All through his wakening bosom swept—
He clasped his country's tree, and wept!

Oh! scorn him not! The strength whereby
The patriot girds himself to die,
The unconquerable power which fills
The freeman battling on his hills,
These have one fountain deep and clear—
The same whence gushed that child-like tear!

THE CHILD'S LAST SLEEP.

SUGGESTED BY A MONUMENT OF CHANTREY'S.

Thou sleepest—but when wilt thou wake, fair child?
When the fawn awakes in the forest wild?
When the lark's wing mounts with the breeze of morn?
When the first rich breath of the rose is born?—
Lovely thou sleepest! yet something lies
Too deep and still on thy soft-sealed eyes;
Mournful, though sweet, is thy rest to see—
When will the hour of thy rising be?

Not when the fawn wakes—not when the lark
On the crimson cloud of the morn floats dark.
Grief with vain passionate tears hath wet
The hair, sheddding gleams from thy pale brow yet;
Love, with sad kisses unfelt, hath pressed
Thy meek-dropt eyelids and quiet breast;
And the glad Spring, calling out bird and bee,
Shall color all blossoms, fair child! but thee.

Thou'rt gone from us, bright one!—that *thou* shouldst die,
And life be left to the butterfly![1]
Thou'rt gone as a dewdrop is swept from the bough:
Oh! for the world where thy home is now!
How may we love but in doubt and fear,
How may we anchor our fond hearts here;
How should e'en joy but a trembler be,
Beautiful dust! when we look on thee?

[1] A butterfly, as if resting on a flower, is sculptured on the monument.

THE SUNBEAM.

Thou art no lingerer in monarch's hall—
A joy thou art, and a wealth to all!
A bearer of hope unto land and sea—
Sunbeam! what gift hath the world like thee?

Thou art walking the billows, and ocean smiles;
Thou hast touched with glory his thousand isles;
Thou hast lit up the ships and the feathery foam,
And gladdened the sailor like words from home.

To the solemn depths of the forest-shades,
Thou art streaming on through their green arcades;
And the quivering leaves that have caught thy glow
Like fire-flies glance to the pools below.

I looked on the mountains—a vapor lay
Folding their heights in its dark array:
Thou breakest forth, and the mist became
A crown and a mantle of living flame.

I looked on the peasant's lowly cot—
Something of sadness had wrapt the spot;
But a gleam of *thee* on its lattice fell,
And it laughed into beauty at that bright spell.

To the earth's wild places a guest thou art,
Flushing the waste like the rose's heart;
And thou scornest not from thy pomp to shed
A tender smile on the ruin's head.

Thou takest through the dim church-aisle thy way,
And its pillars from twilight flash forth to-day,
And its high, pale tombs, with their trophies old,
Are bathed in a flood as of molten gold.

And thou turnest not from the humblest grave,
Where a flower to the sighing winds may wave;
Thou scatterest its gloom like the dreams of rest,
Thou sleepest in love on its grassy breast.

Sunbeam of summer! oh, what is like thee?
Hope of the wilderness, joy of the sea!—
One thing is like thee to mortals given,
The faith touching all things with hues of heaven!

BREATHINGS OF SPRING.

"Thou givest me flowers, thou givest me songs;—bring back
The love that I have lost!"

What wakest thou, Spring? Sweet voices in the woods,
And reed-like echoes, that have long been mute:
Thou bringest back, to fill the solitudes,

The lark's clear pipe, the cuckoo's viewless flute,
Whose tone seems breathing mournfulness or glee,
E'en as our hearts may be.

And the leaves greet thee, Spring !—the joyous leaves,
Whose tremblings gladden many a corpse and glade,
Where each young spray a rosy flush receives,
When thy south wind hath pierced the whispery shade,
And happy murmurs, running through the grass,
Tell that thy footsteps pass.

And the bright waters—they too hear thy call,
Spring, the awakener ! thou hast burst their sleep !
Amidst the hollows of the rocks their fall
Makes melody, and in the forests deep,
Where sudden sparkles and blue gleams betray
Their windings to the day.

And flowers—the fairy-peopled world of flowers !
Thou from the dust hath set that glory free,
Coloring the cowslip with the sunny hours,
And penciling the wood anemone :
Silent they seem—yet each to thoughtful eye
Glows with mute poesy.

But what awakest thou in the *heart*, O Spring !
The human heart, with all its dreams and sighs ?
Thou that givest back so many a buried thing,
Restorer of forgotten harmonies !
Fresh songs and scents break forth where'er thou art—
What wakest thou in the heart ?

Too much, oh ! there too much ! We know not well
Wherefore it should be thus, yet roused by thee,
What fond, strange yearnings, from the soul's deep cell,
Gush for the faces we no more may see !
How are we haunted, in the wind's low tone
By voices that are gone !

Looks of familiar love, that never more,
Never more on earth our aching eyes shall meet.
Past words of welcome to our household door,
And vanished smiles, and sounds of parted feet—
Spring ! 'midst the murmurs of thy flowering trees,
Why, why revivest thou these ?

Vain longings for the dead !—why come they back
With thy young birds, and leaves, and living blooms ?
Oh ! is it not, that from thine earthly track
Hope to thy world may look beyond the tombs ?
Yes, gentle Spring ! no sorrow dims thine air,
Breathed by our loved ones *there* !

THE ILLUMINATED CITY.

The hills all glowed with a festive light,
For the royal city rejoiced by night :
There were lamps hung forth upon tower and tree,
Banners were lifted and streaming free ;
Every tall pillar was wreathed with fire ;
Like a shooting meteor was every spire ;
And the outline of many a dome on high
Was traced, as in stars, on the clear dark sky.

I passed through the street. There were throngs on throngs--
Like sounds of the deep were their mingled songs ;
There was music forth from each palace borne—
A peal of the cymbal, the harp, and horn ;
The forests heard it, the mountains rang,
The hamlets woke to its haughty clang ;
Rich and victorious was every tone,
Telling the land of her foes o'erthrown.

Didst thou meet not a mourner for all the slain?
Thousands lie dead on their battle-plain !
Gallant and true were the hearts that fell—
Grief in the homes they left must dwell :
Grief o'er the aspect of childhood spread,
And bowing the beauty of woman's head !
Didst thou hear, midst the songs, not one tender moan
For the many brave to their slumbers gone ?

I saw not the face of a weeper there—
Too strong, perchance, was the bright lamp's glare !
I heard not a wail midst the joyous crowd—
The music of victory was all too loud !
Mighty it ruled on the winds afar,
Shaking the streets like a conqueror's car—
Through torches and streamers its flood swept by :
How could I listen for moan or sigh ?

Turn then away from life's pageants—turn,
If its deep story thy heart would learn !
Ever too bright is that outward show,
Dazzling the eyes till they see not woe,
But lift the proud mantle which hides from thy view
The things thou shouldst gaze on, the sad and true ;
Nor fear to survey what its folds conceal :—
So must thy spirit be taught to feel !

THE SPELLS OF HOME.

"There blend the ties that strengthen
Our hearts in hours of grief,
The silver links that lengthen
Joy's visits when most brief."

BERNARD BARTON.

By the soft green light in the woody glade,
On the banks of moss where thy childhood played,
By the household tree through which thine eye
First looked in love to the summer sky,
By the dewy gleam, by the very breath
Of the primrose-tufts in the grass beneath,
Upon thy heart there is laid a spell,
Holy and precious—oh, guard it well!

By the sleepy ripple of the stream,
Which hath lulled thee into many a dream,
By the shiver of the ivy leaves
To the wind of morn at thy casement eaves,
By the bee's deep murmur in the limes,
By the music of the Sabbath chimes,
By every sound of thy native shade,
Stronger and dearer the spell is made.

By the gathering round the winter hearth,
When twilight called unto household mirth,
By the fairy tale or the legend old
In that ring of happy faces told,
By the quiet hour when hearts unite
In the parting prayer and the kind "Good-night!"
By the smiling eye, and the loving tone,
Over thy life has the spell been thrown.

And bless that gift!—it hath gentle might,
A guardian power and a guiding light.
It hath led the freeman forth to stand
In the mountain-battles of his land;
It hath brought the wanderer o'er the seas
To die on the hills of his own fresh breeze;
And back to the gates of his father's hall
It hath led the weeping prodigal.

Yes! when thy heart, in its pride, would stray
From the pure first-loves of its youth away—
When the sullying breath of the world would come
O'er the flowers it brought from its childhood's home—
Think thou again of the woody glade,
And the sound by the rustling ivy made—
Think of the tree at thy father's door,
And the kindly spell shall have power once more!

ROMAN GIRL'S SONG.

"Roma, Roma, Roma!
Non è più come era prima."

Rome, Rome! thou art no more
As thou hast been!
On thy seven hills of yore
Thou satst a queen.

Thou hadst thy triumphs then
Purpling the street,
Leaders and sceptred men
Bowed at thy feet.

They that thy mantle wore,
As gods were seen—
Rome, Rome! thou art no more
As thou hast been!

Rome! thine imperial brow
Never shall rise:
What hast thou left thee now?—
Thou hast thy skies!

Blue, deeply blue, they are,
Gloriously bright!
Veiling thy wastes afar
With colored light.

Thou hast the sunset's glow,
Rome! for thy dower,
Flushing tall cypress-bough,
Temple and tower!

And all sweet sounds are thine,
Lovely to hear,
While night, o'er tomb and shrine
Rests darkly clear.

Many a solemn hymn,
By starlight sung,
Sweeps through the arches dim,
Thy wrecks among.

Many a flute's low swell,
On thy soft air
Lingers and loves to dwell
With summer there.

Thou hast the south's rich gift
Of sudden song—
A charming fountain, swift,
Joyous and strong.

Thou hast fair forms that move
With queenly tread;
Thou hast proud fanes above
Thy mighty dead.

Yet wears thy Tiber's shore
A mournful mien:—
Rome, Rome! thou art no more
As thou hast been!

THE DISTANT SHIP.

The sea-bird's wing o'er ocean's breast
Shoots like a glancing star,
While the red radiance of the west
Spreads kindling fast and far:
And yet that splendor wins thee not—
Thy still and thoughtful eye
Dwells but on one dark distant spot
Of all the main and sky.

Look round thee! O'er the slumbering deep
A solemn glory broods;
A fire hath touched the beacon-steep,
And all the golden woods;
A thousand gorgeous clouds on high
Burn with the amber light!—
What spell from that rich pageantry
Chains down thy gazing sight?

A softening thought of human cares,
A feeling linked to earth!
Is not yon speck a bark which bears
The loved of many a hearth?
Oh! do not Hope, and Grief, and Fear
Crowd her frail world even now,
And manhood's prayer and woman's tear
Follow her venturous prow?

Bright are the floating clouds above,
The glittering seas below ;
But we are bound by chords of love
To kindred weal and woe.

Therefore, amidst this wide array
Of glorious things and fair,
My soul is on that bark's lone way—
For human hearts are there.

THE BIRDS OF PASSAGE.

Birds, joyous birds of the wandering wing !
Whence is it ye come with the flowers of spring ?
" We come from the shores of the green old Nile,
From the land where the roses of Sharon smile,
From the palms that wave through the Indian sky,
From the myrrh-trees of glowing Araby.

" We have swept o'er cities in song renowned—
Silent they lie with the deserts round !
We have crossed proud rivers whose tide hath rolled
All dark with the warrior-blood of old ;
And each worn wing hath regained its home,
Under peasant's roof-tree or monarch's dome."

And what have ye found in the monarch's dome,
Since last ye traversed the blue sea's foam ?—
We have found a change, we have found a pall,
And a gloom o'ershadowing the banquet's hall,
And a mark on the floor as of life-drops spilt—
Naught looks the same, save the nest we built ! "

O joyous birds ! it hath still been so ;
Through the halls of kings doth the tempest go !
But the huts of the hamlet lie still and deep,
And the hills o'er their quiet a vigil keep :
Say what have ye found in the peasant's cot
Since last ye parted from that sweet spot ?—

" A change we have found there—and many a change !
Faces and footsteps, and all things strange !
Gone are the heads of the silvery hair,
And the young that were have a brow of care,
And the place is hushed where the children played—
Naught looks the same, save the nest we made ! "

Sad is your tale of the beautiful earth,
Birds that o'ersweep it in power and mirth !
Yet through the wastes of the trackless air
Ye have a guide, and shall *we* despair ?
Ye over desert and deep have passed—
So may *we* reach our bright home at last !

THE GRAVES OF A HOUSEHOLD.

THEY grew in beauty side by side,
They filled one home with glee;
Their graves are severed far and wide,
By mount, and stream, and sea.

The same fond mother bent at night
O'er each fair sleeping brow:
She had each folded flower in sight—
Where are those dreamers now?

One, midst the forest of the West,
By a dark stream is laid—
The Indian knows his place of rest,
Far in the cedar-shade.

The sea, the blue lone sea, hath one—
He lies where pearls lie deep;
He was the loved of all, yet none
O'er his low bed may weep.

One sleeps where southern vines are drest
Above the noble slain:
He wrapt his colors round his breast
On a blood-red field of Spain.

And one—o'er *her* the myrtle showers
Its leaves, by soft winds fanned;
She faded midst Italian flowers—
The last of that bright band.

And parted thus they rest, who played
Beneath the same green tree;
Whose voices mingled as they prayed
Around one parent knee!

They that with smiles lit up the hall,
And cheered with song the hearth!—
Alas, for love! if *thou* wert all,
And naught beyond, O Earth!

MOZART'S REQUIEM.

[A short time before the death of Mozart, a stranger of remarkable appearance, and dressed in deep mourning, called at his house, and requested him to prepare a requiem, in his best style, for the funeral of a distinguished person. The sensitive imagination of the composer immediately seized upon the circumstance as an omen of his own fate; and the sensitive anxiety with which he labored to fulfil the task, had the effect of realizing his impression. He died within a few days after composing this magnificent piece of music, which was performed at his interment.]

"These birds of Paradise long to flee
Back to their native mansion."—*Prophecy of Dante.*

A REQUIEM!—and for whom?
For beauty in its bloom?
For valor fallen—a broken rose or sword?
A dirge for king or chief,
With pomp of stately grief,
Banner, and torch, and waving plume deplored?

Not so—it is not so!
The warning voice I know,
From other worlds a strange mysterious tone;
A solemn funeral air
It called me to prepare,
And my heart answered secretly—my own!

One more then, one more strain,
In links of joy and pain,
Mighty the troubled spirit to enthrall!
And let me breathe my dower
Of passion and of power
Full into that deep lay—the last of all!

The last!—and I must go
From this bright world below,
This realm of sunshine, ringing with sweet sound!
Must leave its festal skies,
With all their melodies,
That ever in my breast glad echoes found!

Yet have I known it long:
Too restless and too strong
Within this clay hath been the o'ermastering flame;
Swift thoughts, that came and went,
Like torrents o'er me sent,
Have shaken, as a reed, my thrilling frame.

Like perfumes on the wind,
Which none may stay or bind,
The beautiful comes floating through my soul;
I strive with yearnings vain
The spirit to detain
Of the deep harmonies that past me roll'

Therefore disturbing dreams
Trouble the secret streams
And founts of music that o'erflow my breast·
Something far more divine
Than may on earth be mine,
Haunts my worn heart, and will not let me rest.

Shall I then *fear* the tone
That breathes from worlds unknown?—
Surely these feverish aspirations *there*
Shall grasp their full desire,
And this unsettled fire
Burn calmly, brightly, in immortal air.

One more then, one more strain;
To earthly joy and pain
A rich, and deep, and passionate farewell
I pour each fervent thought,
With fear, hope, trembling, fraught,
Into the notes that o'er my dust shall swell.

THE IMAGE IN LAVA.[1]

Thou thing of years departed!
What ages have gone by
Since here the mournful seal was set
By love and agony.

Temple and tower have mouldered,
Empires from earth have passed,
And woman's heart hath left a trace
Those glories to outlast!

And childhood's fragile image,
Thus fearfully enshrined,
Survives the proud memorials reared
By conquerors of mankind.

Babe! wert thou brightly slumbering
Upon thy mother's breast
When suddenly the fiery tomb
Shut round each gentle guest?

A strange, dark fate o'ertook you,
Fair babe and loving heart!
One moment of a thousand pangs—
Yet better than to part!

Haply of that fond bosom
On ashes here impressed,
Thou wert the only treasure, child!
Whereon a hope might rest.

Perchance all vainly lavished
Its other love had been,
And where it trusted, naught remained
But thorns on which to lean.

Far better, then, to perish,
Thy form within its clasp,
Than live and lose thee, precious one
From that impassioned grasp.

Oh! I could pass all relics
Left by the pomps of old,
To gaze on this rude monument
Cast in affection's mould.

Love! human love! what art thou?
Thy print upon the dust
Outlives the cities of renown
Wherein the mighty trust!

Immortal, oh! immortal
Thou art, whose earthly glow
Hath given these ashes holiness—
It must, it *must* be so!

CHRISTMAS CAROL.

O lovely voices of the sky,
That hymned the Saviour's birth!
Are ye not singing still on high,
Ye that sang "Peace on earth?"
To us yet speak the strains
Wherewith, in days gone by
Ye blessed thy Syrian swains,
O voices of the sky!

O clear and shining light! whose beams
That hour heaven's glory shed
Around the palms, and o'er the streams,
And on the shepherd's head;
Be near, through life and death,
As in that holiest night
Of Hope, and Joy, and Faith,
O clear and shining light!

O star! which led to Him whose love
Brought down man's ransom free;
Where art thou?—'Midst the hosts above
May we still gaze on thee?
In heaven thou art not set,
Thy rays earth might not dim,
Send them to guide us yet,
O star which led to Him!

A FATHER READING THE BIBLE.[2]

'Twas early day, and sunlight streamed
Soft through a quiet room,

[1] The impression of a woman's form, with an infant clasped to her bosom, found at the uncovering of Herculaneum.

[2] This little poem, which, as its author herself expressed in a letter to Mrs. Joanna

That hushed, but not forsaken seemed,
Still, but with naught of gloom.
For there, serene in happy age
Whose hope is from above,
A father communed with the page
Of heaven's recorded love.

Pure fell the beam, and meekly bright,
On his gray holy hair,
And touched the page with tenderest light,
As if its shrine were there!
But oh! that patriarch's aspect shone
With something lovelier far—
A radiance all the spirit's own,
Caught not from sun or star.

Some word of life e'en then had met
His calm, benignant eye;
Some ancient promise, breathing yet
Of immortality!
Some martyr's prayer, wherein the glow
Of quenchless faith survives:
While every feature said—"*I know*
That my Redeemer lives!"

And silent stood his children by,
Hushing their very breath,
Before the solemn sanctity
Of thoughts o'ersweeping death.
Silent—yet did not each young breast
With love and reverence melt?
O! blest be those fair girls, and blest
That home where God is felt!

THE MEETING OF THE BROTHERS.[1]

—"His early days
Were with him in his heart."
WORDSWORTH.

THE voices of two forest boys,
In years when hearts entwine,
Had filled with childhood's merry noise
A valley of the Rhine:
To rock and stream that sound was known,
Gladsome as hunter's bugle-tone.

The sunny laughter of their eyes,
There had each vineyard seen;
Up every cliff whence eagles rise,
Their bounding step had been:
Ay! their bright youth a glory threw
O'er the wild place wherein they grew.
But this, as day-spring's flush, was brief
As early bloom or dew;
Alas! 'tis but the withered leaf
That wears the enduring hue!
Those rocks along the Rhine's fair shore
Might girdle in their world no more.

For now on manhood's verge they stood,
And heard life's thrilling call,
As if a silver clarion wooed
To some high festival;
And parted as young brothers part,
With love in each unsullied heart.

Baillie, was to her "a thing set apart," as being the last of her productions ever read to her beloved mother, was written at the request of a young lady, who thus made known her wish "that Mrs. Hemans would embody in poetry a picture that so warmed a daughter's heart:"—

"Upon going into our dear father's sitting-room this morning, my sister and I found him deeply engaged reading his Bible, and, being unwilling to interrupt such a holy occupation, we retired to the further end of the apartment, to gaze unobserved upon the serene picture. The bright morning sun was beaming on his venerable silver hair, while his defective sight increased the earnestness with which he perused the blessed book. Our fancy led us to believe that some immortal thought was engaging his mind, for he raised his fine open brow to the light, and we felt we had never loved him more deeply. After an involuntary prayer had passed from our hearts, we whispered to each other, 'Oh! if Mrs. Hemans could only see our father at this moment, her glowing pen would detain the scene; for even as we gaze upon it the bright gleam is vanishing.'

"*December* 9, 1826."

[1] For the tale on which this little poem is founded, see *L'Hermite en Italie.*

They parted. Soon the paths divide
Wherein our steps were one,
Like river-branches, far and wide,
Dissevering as they run ;
And making strangers in their course,
Of waves that had the same bright source.

Met they no more ? Once more they met,
Those kindred hearts and true !
'Twas on a field of death, where yet
The battle-thunders flew,
Though the fierce day was wellnigh past,
And the red sunset smiled its last.

But as the combat closed, they found
For tender thoughts a space,
And e'en upon that bloody ground
Room for one bright embrace,
And poured forth on each other's neck
Such tears as warriors need not check.

The mists o'er boyhood's memory spread
All melted with those tears,
The faces of the holy dead
Rose as in vanished years ;
The Rhine, the Rhine, the ever-blest,
Lifted its voice in each full breast !

Oh ! was it *then* a time to die ?
It was !—that not in vain
The soul of childhood's purity
And peace might turn again.
A ball swept forth—'twas guided well—
Heart unto heart those brothers fell !

Happy, yes, happy thus to go !
Bearing from earth away
Affections, gifted ne'er to know
A shadow—a decay—
A passing touch of change or chill,
A breath of aught whose breath can kill.

And they, between whose severed souls,
Once in close union tied,
A gulf is set, a current rolls
Forever to divide];
Well may *they* envy such a lot,
Whose hearts yearn on—but mingle not.

THE LAST WISH.

"Well may I weep to leave this world—thee—all these beautiful woods, and plains, and hills."—*Lights and Shadows.*

Go to the forest shade
Seek thou the well-known glade,
There, heavy with sweet dew, the violets lie,
Gleaming through moss-tufts deep,
Like dark eyes, filled with sleep,
And bathed in hues of summer's midnight sky.

Bring me their buds, to shed
Around my dying bed
A breath of May and of the wood's repose ;
For I, in sooth, depart
With a reluctant heart,
That fain would linger where the bright sun glows.

Fain would I stay with thee !—
Alas ! this may not be ;
Yet bring me still the gifts of happier hours !
Go where the fountain's breast
Catches, in glassy rest,
The dim green light that pours through laurel bowers.

I know how softly bright,
Steeped in that tender light,
The water-lilies tremble there e'en now ;
Go to the pure stream's edge,
And from its whispering sedge
Bring me those flowers to cool my fevered brow !

Then, as in Hope's young days,
Track thou the antique maze
Of the rich garden to its grassy mound ;
There is a lone white rose,
Shedding, in sudden snows,
Its faint leaves o'er the emerald turf around.

Well knowest thou that fair tree—
A murmur of the bee
Dwells ever in the honeyed lime above :
Bring me one pearly flower
Of all its clustering shower—
For on that spot we first revealed our love.

Gather one woodbine bough,
Then, from the lattice low
Of the bowered cottage which I bade thee mark,
When by the hamlet last
Through dim wood-lanes we passed,
While dews were glancing to the glow-worm's spark.

Haste ! to my pillow bear
Those fragrant things and fair ;
My hand no more may bind them up at eve—
Yet shall their odor soft
One bright dream round me waft
Of life, youth, summer—all that I must leave !

And oh ! if thou wouldst ask
Wherefore thy steps I task,
The grove, the stream, the hamlet vale to trace—
'Tis that some thought of me,
When I am gone, may be
The spirit bound to each familiar place.

I bid mine image dwell
(Oh ! break not thou the spell !)

In the deep wood and by the fountain-side ;
Thou must not, my beloved !
Rove where we two have roved,
Forgetting her that in her spring-time died !

FAIRY FAVORS.

——— Give me but
Something whereunto I may bind my heart;
Something to love, to rest upon, to clasp
Affection's tendrils round.

Wouldst thou wear the gift of immortal bloom ?
Wouldst thou smile in scorn at the shadowy tomb ?
Drink of this cup ! it is richly fraught
With balm from the gardens of Genii brought ;
Drink ! and the spoiler shall pass thee by,
When the young all scattered like rose-leaves lie.

And would not the youth of my soul be gone,
If the loved had left me, one by one ?
Take back the cup that may never bless,
The gift that would make me brotherless.
How should I live, with no kindred eye
To reflect mine immortality !

Wouldst thou have empire, by sign or spell,
Over the mighty in air that dwell ?
Wouldst thou call the spirits of shore and steep
To fetch thee jewels from ocean's deep ?
Wave but this rod, and a viewless band,
Slaves to thy will, shall around thee stand.

And would not fear, at my coming, then
Hush every voice in the homes of men ?
Would not bright eyes in my presence quail ?
Young cheeks with a nameless thrill turn pale ?
No gift be mine that aside would turn
The human love for whose founts I yearn.

Wouldst thou then read through the hearts of those
Upon whose faith thou hast sought repose ?
Wear this rich gem ! it is charmed to show
When a change comes over affection's glow :
Look on its flushing or fading hue,
And learn if the trusted be false or true !

Keep, keep the gem, that I still may trust,
Though my heart's wealth be but poured on dust ;

Let not a doubt in my soul have place,
To dim the light of a loved one's face ;
Leave to the earth its warm sunny smile—
That glory would pass could I look on guile !

Say, then, what boon of my power shall be,
Favoured of spirits ! poured forth on thee ?
Thou scornest the treasures of wave and mine,
Thou wilt not drink of the cup divine,
Thou art fain with a mortal's lot to rest—
Answer me ! how may I grace it best ?

Oh ! give me no sway o'er the powers unseen,
But a human heart where my own may lean !
A friend, one tender and faithful friend,
Whose thoughts' free current with mine may blend;
And, leaving not either on earth alone,
Bid the bright, calm close of our lives be one !

THE SIEGE OF VALENCIA.

A DRAMATIC POEM.

Judicio ha dado esta no vista hazanna
Del valor que en los siglos venideros
Tendrán los Hijos de la fuerte España,
Hijos de tal padres herederos.

Hallò sola en Numancia toda quanto
Debe con justo titulo cantarse,
Y lo que puede dar materia al canto.

Numancia de Cervantes.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The history of Spain records two instances of the severe and self-devoting heroism which forms the subject of the following dramatic poem. The first of these occurred at the siege of Tarifa, which was defended, in 1294, for Sancho, King of Castile, during the rebellion of his brother, Don Juan, by Guzman, surnamed the Good.[1] The second is related of Alonso Lopez de Texeda, who, until his garrison had been utterly disabled by pestilence, maintained the city of Zamora for the children of Don Pedro the Cruel, against the forces of Henrique of Trastamara.[2]

Impressive as were the circumstances which distinguished both these memorable sieges, it appeared to the author of the following pages that a deeper interest, as well as a stronger color of nationality, might be imparted to the scenes in which she has feebly attempted "to describe high passions and high actions," by connecting a religious feeling with the patriotism and high-minded loyalty which had thus been proved, "faithful unto death," and by surrounding her ideal *dramatis personæ* with recollections derived from the heroic legends of Spanish chivalry. She has, for this reason, employed the agency of imaginary characters, and fixed upon Valencia del Cid as the scene to give them

"A local habitation and a name."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Alvar Gonzalez.	*Governor of Valencia.*
Alphonso, Carlos,	*His Sons.*
Hernandez.	*A Priest.*
Abdullah,	*A Moorish Prince, Chief of the Army besieging Valencia.*
Garcias.	*A Spanish Knight.*
Elmina,	*Wife to Gonzalez.*
Ximena,	*Her Daughter.*
Theresa,	*An Attendant.*

Citizens, Soldiers, Attendants, &c.

[1] See Quantiana's *Vidas de Espanoles Célèbres*, p. 53.
[2] See the preface to Southey's *Chronicle of the Cid.*

SCENE I.

Room in a Palace of Valencia.—XIMENA *singing to a Lute.*

BALLAD.

"Thou hast not been with a festal throng
At the pouring of the wine;
Men bear not from the hall of song
A mien so dark as thine!
There's blood upon thy shield,
There's dust upon thy plume,
Thou hast brought from some disastrous field
That brow of wrath and gloom!"

"And is there blood upon my shield?
Maiden, it well may be!
We have sent the streams, from our battle-field,
All darkened to the sea!
We have given the founts a stain,
'Midst their woods of ancient pine;
And the ground is wet—but not with rain,
Deep dyed—but not with wine!"

"The ground is wet—but not with rain—
We have been in war array,
And the noblest blood of Christian Spain
Hath bathed her soil to-day.
I have seen the strong man die,
And the stripling meet his fate,
Where the mountain-winds go sounding by,
In the Roncesvalles' Strait."

"In the gloomy Roncesvalles' Strait
There are helms and lances cleft;
And they that moved at morn elate
On a bed of heath are left!
There's many a fair young face
Which the war-steed hath gone o'er;
At many a board there is kept a place
For those that come no more!"

"Alas! for love, for woman's breast,
If woe like this must be!
Hast thou seen a youth with an eagle crest,
And a white plume waving free?
With his proud quick-flashing eye,
And his mien of knightly state?
Doth he come from where the swords flashed high,
In the Roncesvalles' Strait?"

"In the gloomy Roncesvalles' Strait
I saw, and marked him well;
For nobly on his steed he sate.
When the pride of manhood fell!
But it is not *youth* which turns
From the field of spears again;
For the boy's high heart too wildly burns,
Till it rests amidst the slain!"

"Thou canst not say that *he* lies low,
The lovely and the brave?
Oh! none could look on his joyous brow,
And think upon the grave!
Dark, dark perchance the day,
Hath been with valor's fate;
But *he* is on his homeward way,
From the Roncesvalles' Strait!"

"There is dust upon his joyous brow,
And o'er his graceful head;
And the war-horse will not wake him now,
Though it browse his greensward bed!
I have seen the stripling die,
And the strong man meet his fate,
Where the mountain winds go sounding by,
In the Roncesvalles' Strait!"

(ELMINA *enters.*)

Elm. Your songs are not as those of other days,
Mine own Ximena! Where is now the young
And buoyant spirit of the morn, which once
Breathed in your spring-like melodies, and woke
Joy's echo from all hearts?
Xim. My mother, this
Is not the free air of our mountain-wilds;
And these are not the halls wherein my voice
First poured those gladdening strains.
Elm. Alas! thy heart
(I see it well) doth sicken for the pure
Free-wandering breezes of the joyous hills,
Where thy young brothers, o'er the rock and heath,
Bound in glad boyhood, e'en as torrent streams
Leap brightly from the heights. Had we not been
Within these walls, thus suddenly begirt,
Thou shouldst have tracked ere now, with step as light,
Their wild wood-paths.
Xim. I would not but have shared
These hours of woe and peril, though the deep
And solemn feelings wakening at their voice,
Claim all the wrought-up spirit to themselves,
And will not blend with mirth. The storm doth hush
All floating whispery sounds, all bird-notes wild
O' the summer forest, filling earth and heaven
With its own awful music. And 'tis well!
Should not a hero's child be trained to hear

The trumpet's blast unstartled, and to look
In the fixed face of death without dismay?
Elm. Woe! woe! that aught so gentle and so young
Should thus be called to stand i' the tempest's path,
And bear the token and the hue of death
On a bright soul so soon! I had not shrunk
From mine own lot; but thou, my child, shouldst move
As a light breeze of heaven, through summer-bowers.
And not o'er foaming billows. We are fallen
On dark and evil days!
Xim. Ay, days that wake
All to their tasks!—Youth may not loiter now
In the green walks of spring; and womanhood
Is summoned unto conflicts, heretofore
The lot of warrior souls. Strength is born
In the deep silence of long-suffering hearts:
Not amidst joy.
Elm. Hast thou some secret woe
That thus thou speakst?
Xim. What sorrow should be mine,
Unknown to thee?
Elm. Alas! the baleful air
Wherewith the pestilence in darkness walks
Through the devoted city, like a blight
Amidst the rose-tints of thy cheek hath fallen,
And wrought an early withering!—Thou hast crossed
The paths of death, and ministered to those
O'er whom his shadow rested, till thine eye
Hath changed its glancing sunbeam for a still,
Deep, solemn radiance, and thy brow hath caught
A wild and high expression, which at times
Fades into desolate calmness, most unlike
What youth's bright mien should wear. My gentle child!
I look on thee in fear!
Xim Thou hast no cause
To fear for me. When the wild clash of steel,
And the deep tambour, and the heavy step
Of armèd men break on our morning dreams!
When, hour by hour, the noble and the brave
Are falling round us, and we deem it much
To give them funeral-rites, and call them blest
If the good sword, in its own stormy hour,
Hath done its work upon them, ere disease
Hath chilled their fiery blood;—it is no time
For the light mien wherewith, in happier hours,
We trod the woodland mazes, when young leaves
Were whispering in the gale.—My father comes—
Oh! speak of me no more. I would not shade
His princely aspect with a thought less high
Than his proud duties claim.

(GONZALEZ *enters.*)

Elm. My noble lord!
Welcome from this day's toil!—It is the hour
Whose shadows, as they deepen, bring repose

Unto all weary men ; and wilt not thou
Free thy mailed bosom from the corslet's weight,
To rest at fall of eve?
Gon. There may be rest
For the tired peasant, when the vesper-bell
Doth send him to his cabin, and beneath
His vine and olive he may sit at eve,
Watching his children's sport: but unto *him*
Who keeps the watch-place on the mountain-height,
When heaven lets loose the storms that chasten realms
—Who speaks of rest?
Xim. My father, shall I fill
The wine-cup for thy lips, or bring the lute
Whose sounds thou lovest?
Gon. If there be strains of power
To rouse a spirit, which in triumphant scorn
May cast off nature's feebleness, and hold
Its proud career unshackled, dashing down
Tears and fond thoughts to earth ; give voice to those!
I have need of such, Ximena!—we must hear
No melting music now!
Xim. I know all high
Heroic ditties of the elder-time,
Sung by the mountain-Christians, in the holds
Of the everlasting hills, whose snows yet bear
The print of Freedom's step ; and all wild strains
Wherein the dark serranos[1] teach the rocks,
And the pine-forests, deeply to resound
The praise of later champions. Wouldst thou hear
The war-song of thine ancestor, the Cid?
Gon. Ay, speak of him; for in that name is power,
Such as might rescue kingdoms! Speak of him!
We are his children! They that can look back
I' the annals of their house on such a name,
How should *they* take dishonor by the hand,
And o'er the threshold of their father's halls
First lead her as a guest?
Elm. Oh, why is this?
How my heart sinks!
Gon. It must not fail thee *yet*,
Daughters of heroes!—thine inheritance
Is strength to meet all conflicts. Thou canst number
In thy long line of glorious ancestry
Men, the bright offering of whose blood hath made
The ground it bathed e'en as an altar, whence
High thoughts shall rise forever. Bore they not,
'Midst flame and sword, their witness of the Cross,
With its victorious inspiration girt
As with a conqueror's robe, till the infidel,
O'erawed, shrank back before them?—Ay, the earth
Doth call them martyrs, but *their* agonies
Were of a moment, tortures whose brief aim
Was to destroy, within whose powers and scope

[1] Serranos—mountaineers.

Lay naught but dust.—And earth doth call them *martyrs!*
Why, Heaven but claimed their blood, their lives, and not
The things which grow as tendrils round their hearts;
No, not their children!
Elm. Mean'st thou?—knowst thou aught?
I cannot utter it—My sons! my sons!
Is it of them?—Oh! wouldst thou speak of them?
Gon. A mother's heart divineth but too well!
Elm. Speak, I adjure thee!—I can bear it all.—
Where are my children?
Gon. In the Moorish camp
Whose lines have girt the city.
Xim. But they live?
—All is not lost, my mother!
Elm. Say they live.
Gon. Elmina, still they live.
Elm. But captives!—They
Whom my fond heart had imaged to itself
Bounding from cliff to cliff amidst the wilds
Where the rock-eagle seemed not more secure
In its rejoicing freedom!—And my boys
Are captives with the Moor!—Oh! how was this?
Gon. Alas! our brave Alphonso, in the pride
Of boyish daring, left our mountain-halls,
With his young brother, eager to behold
The face of noble war. Thence on their way
Were the rash wanderers captured.
Elm. 'Tis enough.
—And when shall they be ransomed?
Gon. There is asked
A ransom far too high.
Elm. What! have we wealth
Which might redeem a monarch, and our sons
The while wear fetters?—Take thou all for them,
And we will cast our worthless grandeur from us,
As 'twere a cumbrous robe!—Why, *thou* art one,
To whose high nature pomp hath ever been
But as the plumage of a warrior's helm,
Worn or thrown off as lightly. And for me,
Thou knowest not how serenely I could take
The peasant's lot upon me, so my heart,
Amidst it deep affections undisturbed,
May dwell in silence.
Xim. Father, doubt thou not
But we will bind ourselves to poverty,
With glad devotedness, if this, but this,
May win them back.—Distrust us not, my father!
We can bear all things.
Gon. Can ye bear disgrace?
Xim. We were not born for this.
Gon. No, thou sayest well!
Hold to that lofty faith.—My wife, my child!
Hath earth no treasures richer than the gems
Torn from her secret caverns?—If by them
Chains may be riven, then let the captive spring

Rejoicing to the light!—But he, for whom
Freedom and life may but be worn with shame,
Hath naught to do, save fearlessly to fix
His steadfast look on the majestic heavens,
And proudly die!

Elm. Gonzalez, *who* must die?

Gon. (*hurriedly*). They on whose lives a fearful price is set
But to be paid by treason!—Is't enough?
Or must I yet seek words?

Elm. That look saith more!—
Thou canst not mean——

Gon. I do!—why dwells there not
Power in a glance to speak it?—They must die!
They—must their names be told—*Our sons* must die
Unless I yield the city!

Xim. Oh! look up!
My mother, sink not thus!—Until the grave
Shut from our sight its victims, there is hope.

Elm. (*in a low voice*). Whose knell was in the breeze?—
No, no, not *theirs!*
Whose was the blessed voice that spoke of hope?
—And there is hope!—I will not be subdued—
I will not hear a whisper of despair!
For nature is all-powerful, and her breath
Moves like a quickening spirit o'er the depths
Within a father's heart.—Thou too, Gonzalez,
Wilt tell me there is hope!

Gon. (*solemnly*). Hope but in Him
Who bade the patriarch lay his fair young son
Bound on the shrine of sacrifice, and when
The bright steel quivered in the father's hand
Just raised to strike, sent forth His awful voice
Through the still clouds, and on the breathless air,
Commanding to withhold!—Earth has no hope:
It rests with Him.

Elm. *Thou* canst not tell me this!
Thou father of my sons, within whose hands
Doth lie thy children's fate.

Gon. If there have been
Men in whose bosoms nature's voice hath made
Its accents as the solitary sound
Of an o'erpowering torrent, silencing
The austere and yet divine remonstrances
Whispered by faith and honor, lift thy hands;
And to that heaven which arms the brave with strength,
Pray, that the father of thy sons may ne'er
Be thus found wanting!

Elm. Then their doom is sealed!—
Thou wilt not save my children?

Gon. Hast thou cause,
Wife of my youth! to deem it lies within
The bounds of possible things, that I should link
My name to that word—*traitor?* They that sleep
On their proud battle-fields, thy sires and mine,
Died not for this!

Elm. Oh, cold and hard of heart!
Thou shouldst be born for empire, since thy soul
Thus lightly from all human bonds can free
Its haughty flight! Men! men! too much is yours
Of vantage; ye that with a sound, a breath,
A shadow, thus can fill the desolate space
Of rooted-up affections, o'er whose void
Our yearning hearts must wither!—So it is,
Dominion must be won! Nay, leave me not—
My heart is bursting, and I *must* be heard!
Heaven hath given power to mortal agony,
As to the elements in their hour of might
And mastery o'er creation! Who shall dare
To mock that fearful strength!—I *must* be heard!
Give me my sons!

Gon. That they may live to hide
With covering hands the indignant flush of shame
On their young brows, when men shall speak of him
They called their father!—Was the oath, whereby
On the altar of my faith, I bound myself,
With an unswerving spirit to maintain
This free and Christian city for my God,
And for my king, a writing traced on sand
That passionate tears should wash it from the earth,
Or even the life-drops of a bleeding heart
Efface it, as a billow sweeps away
The last light vessel's wake?—Then never more
Let man's deep vows be trusted!—though enforced
By all the appeals of high remembrances,
And silent claims of the sepulchres, wherein
His fathers with their stainless glory sleep,
On their good swords! Thinkest thou *I* feel no pangs?
He that hath given me sons doth know the heart
Whose treasure He recalls. Of this no more.
'Tis vain. I tell thee that the inviolate cross
Still from our ancient temples must look up
Through the blue heavens of Spain, though at its foot
I perish, with my race. Thou *darest* not ask
That I, the son of warriors—men who died
To fix it on that proud supremacy—
Should tear the sign of our victorious faith
From its high place of sunbeams, for the Moor
In impious joy to trample!

Elm. Scorn me not
In mine extreme of misery!—Thou art strong—
Thy heart is not as mine. My brain grows wild;
I know not what I ask!—And yet 'twere but
Anticipating fate—since it must fall,
That cross *must* fall at last! There is no power,
No hope within this city of the grave,
To keep its place on high. Her sultry air
Breathes heavily of death, her warriors sink
Beneath their ancient banners, ere the Moor
Hath bent his bow against them; for the shaft
Of pestilence flies more swiftly to its mark

Than the arrow of the desert. Even the skies
O'erhang the desolate splendor of her domes
With an ill omen's aspect, shaping forth,
From the dull clouds, wild menacing forms and signs
Foreboding ruin. *Man* might be withstood,
But who shall cope with famine and disease
When leagued with armed foes?—Where now the aid,
Where the long-promised lances, of Castile!
—We are forsaken in our utmost need—
By heaven and earth forsaken!

Gon. If this be
(And yet I will not deem it), we must fall
As men that in severe devotedness
Have chosen their part, and bound themselves to death,
Through high conviction that their suffering land,
By the free blood of martyrdom alone,
Shall call deliverance down.

Elm. Oh! I have stood
Beside thee through the beating storms of life,
With the true heart of unrepining love,
As the poor peasant's mate doth cheerily,
In the parched vineyard, or the harvest-field,
Bearing her part, sustain with him the heat
And burden of the day:—But now the hour,
The heavy hour is come, when human strength
Sinks down, a toil-worn pilgrim, in the dust,
Owning that woe is mightier!—Spare me yet
This bitter cup, my husband! Let not her,
The mother of the lovely, sit and mourn
In her unpeopled home, a broken stem,
O'er its fallen roses dying!

Gon. Urge me not,
Thou that through all sharp conflicts hast been found
Worthy a brave man's love!—oh, urge me not
To guilt, which through the midst of blinding tears,
In its own hues thou seest not!—Death may scarce
Bring aught like this!

Elm. All, all thy gentle race,
The beautiful things that around thee grew,
Creatures of sunshine! Wilt thou doom them all?
—She too, thy daughter—doth her smile unmarked
Pass from thee, with its radiance, day by day?
Shadows are gathering round her—seest thou not
The misty dimness of the spoiler's breath
Hangs o'er her beauty, and the face which made
The summer of our hearts, now doth but send,
With every glance, deep bodings through the soul,
Telling of early fate.

Gon. I see a change
Far nobler on her brow!—She is as one,
Who, at the trumpet's sudden call, hath risen
From the gay banquet, and in scorn cast down
The wine-cup, and the garland, and the lute
Of festal hours, for the good spear and helm,
Beseeming sterner tasks.—Her eye hath lost

The beam which laughed upon the awakening heart,
E'en as morn breaks o'er earth. But far within
Its full dark orb, a light hath sprung, whose source
Lies deeper in the soul.—And let the torch
Which but illumined the glittering pageant, fade!
The altar-flame, i' the sanctuary's recess,
Burns quenchless, being of heaven!—She hath put on
Courage, and faith, and generous constancy,
Even as a breast-plate.—Ay, men look on her,
As she goes forth, serenely to her tasks,
Binding the warrior's wounds, and bearing fresh
Cool draughts to fevered lips; they look on her,
Thus moving in her beautiful array
Of gentle fortitude, and bless the fair
Majestic vision, and unmurmuring turn
Unto their heavy toils.

Elm. And seest thou not
In that high faith and strong collectedness
A fearful inspiration?—*They* have cause
To tremble, who behold the unearthly light
Of high, and, it may be, prophetic thought,
Investing youth with grandeur!—From the grave
It rises, on whose shadowy brink thy child
Waits but a father's hand to snatch her back
Into the laughing sunshine.—Kneel with me;
Ximena, kneel beside me, and implore
That which a deeper, more prevailing voice
Than ours doth ask, and will not be denied;
—His children's lives!

Xim. Alas! this may not be,
Mother!—I cannot. [*Exit* XIMENA.

Gon. My heroic child!
—A terrible sacrifice thou claimest, O God!
From creatures in whose agonizing hearts
Nature is strong as death!

Elm. Is't thus in thine?
Away!—what time is given thee to resolve
On—what I cannot utter?—Speak! thou knowst
Too well what I would say.

Gon. Until—ask not!
The time is brief.

Elm. Thou saidst—I heard not right—

Gon. The time is brief.

Elm. What! must we burst all ties
Wherewith the thrilling chords of life are twined;
And, for this task's fulfilment, can it be
That man, in his cold heartlessness, hath dared
To number and to mete us forth the sands
Of hours—nay, moments? Why, the sentenced wretch,
He on whose soul there rests a brother's blood
Poured forth in slumber, is allowed more time
To wean his turbulent passions from the world
His presence doth pollute!—It is not thus!
We must have time to school us.

Gon. We have but

To bow the head in silence, when Heaven's voice
Calls back the things we love.
Elm. Love! love!—there are soft smiles and gentle words,
And there are faces, skilful to put on
The look we trust in—and 'tis mockery all!
—A faithless mist, a desert-vapor, wearing
The brightness of clear waters, thus to cheat
The thirst that semblance kindled!—There is none,
In all this cold and hollow world, no fount
Of deep, strong, deathless love, save that within
A mother's heart.—It is but pride, wherewith
To his fair son the father's eye doth turn,
Watching his growth. Ay, on the boy he looks,
The bright glad creature springing in his path
But as the heir of his great name, the young
And stately tree, whose rising strength ere long
Shall bear his trophies well.—And this is love!
This is *man's* love!—What marvel?—*you* ne'er made
Your breast the pillow of his infancy,
While to the fulness of your heart's glad heavings
His fair cheek rose and fell; and his bright hair
Waved softly to your breath!—*You* ne'er kept watch
Beside him, till the last pale star had set,
And morn, all dazzling, as in triumph, broke
On your dim weary eye; not *yours* the face
Which, early faded through fond care for him,
Hung o'er his sleep, and, duly as heaven's light,
Was there to greet his wakening! *You* ne'er smoothed
His couch, ne'er sung him to his rosy rest,
Caught his least whisper, when his voice from yours
Had learned soft utterance; pressed your lip to his,
When fever parched it; hushed his wayward cries,
With patient, vigilant, never-wearied love!
No! these are *woman's* tasks!—In these her youth,
And bloom of cheek, and buoyancy of heart,
Steal from her all unmarked?—My boys! my boys!
Hath vain affection borne with all for this?
—Why were ye given me?
Gon. Is there strength in man
Thus to endure? That thou couldst read, through all
Its depths of silent agony, the heart
Thy voice of woe doth rend!
Elm. Thy heart—*thy* heart!—Away! it feels not *now!*
But an hour comes to tame the mighty man
Unto the infant's weakness; nor shall Heaven
Spare you that bitter chastening!—May you live
To be alone, when loneliness doth seem
Most heavy to sustain!—For me, my voice
Of prayer and fruitless weeping shall be soon
With all forgotten sounds; my quiet place
Low with my lovely ones, and we shall sleep
Though kings lead armies o'er us, we shall sleep,
Wrapt in earth's covering mantle!—you the while
Shall sit within your vast, forsaken halls,
And hear the wild and melancholy winds

Moan through their drooping banners, never more
To wave above your race. Ay, then call up
Shadows—dim phantoms from ancestral tombs,
But all, all—*glorious*—conquerors, chieftains, kings,
To people that cold void!—And when the strength
From your right arm hath melted, when the blast
Of the shrill clarion gives your heart no more
A fiery wakening; if at last you pine
For the glad voices, and the bounding steps,
Once through your home re-echoing, and the clasp
Of twining arms, and all the joyous light
Of eyes that laughed with youth, and made your board
A place of sunshine;—when those days are come,
Then, in your utter desolation, turn
To the cold world, the smiling, faithless world,
Which hath swept past you long, and bid it quench
Your soul's deep thirst with *fame!* immortal *fame!*
Fame to the sick of heart!—a gorgeous robe,
A crown of victory, unto him that dies
In the burning waste, for water!
Con. This from *thee!*
Now the last drop of bitterness is poured.
Elmina—I forgive thee! [*Exit* ELMINA.
Aid me, Heaven!
From whom alone is power!—Oh! thou hast set
Duties so stern of aspect, in my path,
They almost, to my startled gaze, assume
The hue of things less hallowed! Men have sunk
Unblamed beneath such trials! Doth not He
Who made us know the limits of our strength?
My wife! my sons!—Away! I must not pause
To give my heart one moment's mastery thus!
[*Exit* GONZALEZ.

SCENE II.—*The Aisle of a Gothic Church.*

HERNANDEZ, GARCIAS, *and others.*

Her. The rites are closed. Now, valiant men depart,
Each to his place—I may not say, of rest—
Your faithful vigils for your sons may win
What must not be your own. Ye are as those
Who sow, in peril and in care, the seed
Of the fair tree, beneath whose stately shade
They may not sit. But blessed be they who toil
For after-days!—All high and holy thoughts
Be with you, warriors, through the lingering hours
Of the night-watch!
Gar. Ay, father! we have need
Of high and holy thoughts, wherewith to fence
Our hearts against despair. Yet have I been
From youth a son of war. The stars have looked
A thousand times upon my couch of heath,
Spread 'midst the wild sierras, by some stream

Whose dark-red waves looked e'en as though their source
Lay not in rocky caverns, but the veins
Of noble hearts; while many a knightly crest
Rolled with them to the deep. And, in the years
Of my long exile and captivity,
With the fierce Arab I have watched beneath
The still pale shadow of some lonely palm,
At midnight in the desert; while the wind
Swelled with the lion's roar, and heavily
The fearfulness and might of solitude
Pressed on my weary heart.

Her. (*thoughtfully.*) Thou little knowest
Of what is solitude!—I tell thee, those
For whom—in earth's remotest nook, howe'er
Divided from their path by chain on chain
Of mighty mountains, and the amplitude
Of rolling seas—there beats one human heart,
There breathes one being, unto whom their name
Comes with a thrilling and a gladdening sound
Heard o'er the din of life, are not alone!
Not on the deep, nor in the wild, alone:
For there is that on earth with which they hold
A brotherhood of soul! Call *him* alone,
Who stands shut out from this!—and let not those
Whose homes are bright with sunshine and with love
Put on the insolence of happiness,
Glorying in that proud lot!—A lonely hour
Is on its way to each, to all; for Death
Knows no companionship.

Gar. I have looked on Death
In field, and storm, and flood. But never yet
Hath aught weighed down my spirit to a mood
Of sadness, dreaming o'er dark auguries,
Like this, our watch by midnight. Fearful things
Are gathering round us. Death upon the earth,
Omens in heaven! The summer skies put forth
No clear bright stars above us, but at times,
Catching some comet's fiery hue of wrath,
Marshal their clouds to armies, traversing
Heaven with the rush of meteor-steeds, the array
Of spears and banners, tossing like the pines
Of Pyrenean forests, when the storm
Doth sweep the mountains.

Her. Ay, last night I too
Kept vigil, gazing on the angry heavens;
And I beheld the meeting and the shock
Of those wild hosts in the air, when, as they closed,
A red and sultry mist, like that which mantles
The thunder's path, fell o'er them. Then were flung
Through the dull glare broad cloudy banners forth,
And chariots seemed to whirl, and steeds to sink,
Bearing down crested warriors. But all this
Was dim and shadowy;—then swift darkness rushed
Down on the unearthly battle, as the deep

Swept o'er the Egyptian's armament. I looked—
And all that fiery field of plumes and spears
Was blotted from heaven's face! I looked again—
And from the brooding mass of cloud leaped forth
One meteor-sword, which o'er the reddening sea
Shook with strange motion, such as earthquakes give
Unto a rocking citadel!—I beheld,
And yet my spirit sunk not.

Gar. Neither deem
That mine hath blenched. But these are sights and sounds
To awe the firmest.—Knowst thou what we hear
At midnight from the walls? Were it but the deep
Barbaric horn, or Moorish tambour's peal,
Thence might the warrior's heart catch impulses
Quickening its fiery currents. But our ears
Are pierced by other tones. We hear the knell
For brave men in their noon of strength cut down,
And the shrill wail of woman, and the dirge
Faint swelling through the streets. Then e'en the air
Hath strange and fitful murmurs of lament,
As if the viewless watchers of the land
Sighed on its hollow breezes! To my soul,
The torrent rush of battle, with its din
Of trampling steeds and ringing panoply,
Were, after these faint sounds of drooping woe,
As the free sky's glad music unto him
Who leaves a couch of sickness.

Her. (*with solemnity*). If to plunge
In the mid-waves of combat, as they bear
Chargers and spearmen onwards; and to make
A reckless bosom's front the buoyant mark,
On that wild current, for ten thousand arrows;
If *thus* to dare were valor's noblest aim,
Lightly might fame be won! But there are things
Which ask a spirit of more exalted pitch,
And courage tempered with a holier fire!
Well mayst thou say that these are fearful times,
Therefore be firm, be patient!—There is strength,
And a fierce instinct, e'en in common souls,
To bear up manhood with a stormy joy,
When red swords meet in lightning!—But our task
Is more and nobler! We have to endure,
And to keep watch, and to arouse a land,
And to defend an altar! If we fall,
So that our blood make but the millionth part
Of Spain's great ransom, we may count it joy
To die upon her bosom, and beneath
The banner of her faith! Think but on this,
And gird your hearts with silent fortitude,
Suffering, yet hoping all things—Fare ye well.

Gar. Father, farewell.

[*Exeunt* GARCIAS *and his followers.*

Her. These men have earthly ties
And bondage on their natures! To the cause

Of God, and Spain's revenge, they bring but half
Their energies and hopes. But he whom Heaven
Hath called to be the awakener of a land,
Should have his soul's affections all absorbed
In that majestic purpose, and press on
To its fulfilment, as a mountain-born
And mighty stream, with all its vassal-rills,
Sweeps proudly to the ocean, pausing not
To dally with the flowers. Hark! What quick step
Comes hurrying through the gloom at this dead hour?

(ELMINA *enters.*)

Elm. Are not all hours as one to misery? Why
Should *she* take note of time, for whom the day
And night have lost their blessed attributes
Of sunshine and repose?
Her. I know thy griefs;
But there are trials for the noble heart,
Wherein its own deep fountains must supply
All it can hope of comfort. Pity's voice
Comes with vain sweetness to the unheeding ear
Of anguish, e'en as music heard afar
On the green shore, by him who perishes
'Midst rocks and eddying waters.
Elm. Think thou not
I sought thee but for pity. I am come
For that which grief is privileged to demand
With an imperious claim, from all whose form,
Whose human form, doth seal them unto suffering!
Father! I ask thine *aid.*
Her. There is no aid
For thee or for thy children, but with Him
Whose presence is around us in the cloud,
As in the shining and the glorious light.
Elm. There is no aid!—art thou a man of God?
Art thou a man of sorrow?—for the world
Doth call thee such—and hast thou not been taught
By God and sorrow?—mighty as they are,
To own the claims of misery?
Her. Is there power
With me to save thy sons?—implore of Heaven!
Elm. Doth not Heaven work its purposes by man?
I tell thee *thou* canst save them! Art thou not
Gonzalez' counsellor? Unto him thy words
Are e'en as oracles——
Her. And therefore?—Speak!
The noble daughter of Pelayo's line
Hath naught to ask, unworthy of the name
Which is a nation's heritage. Dost thou shrink?
Elm. Have pity on me, father! I must speak
That from the thought of which but yesterday
I had recoiled in scorn!—But this is past.
Oh! we grow humble in our agonies,
And to the dust—their birthplace—bow the heads

That wore the crown of glory! I am weak—
My chastening is far more than I can bear.
Her. These are no times for weakness. On our hills
The ancient cedars, in their gathered might,
Are battling with the tempest; and the flower
Which cannot meet its driving blast must die.
But thou hast drawn thy nurture from a stem
Unwont to bend or break. Lift thy proud head,
Daughter of Spain!—what wouldst thou with thy lord?
Elm. Look not upon me thus!—I have no power
To tell thee. Take thy keen disdainful eye
Off from my soul! What! am I sunk to this?
I, whose blood sprung from heroes! How my sons
Will scorn the mother that would bring disgrace
On their majestic line! My sons! my sons!
Now is all else forgotten!—I had once
A babe that in the early spring-time lay
Sickening upon my bosom, till at last,
When earth's young flowers were opening to the sun,
Death sunk on his meek eyelid, and I deemed
All sorrow light to mine! But now the fate
Of all my children seems to brood above me
In the dark thunder-clouds!—Oh! I have power
And voice unfaltering now to speak my prayer
And my last lingering hope, that thou shouldst win
The father to relent, to save his sons!
Her. By yielding up the city?
Elm. Rather say
By meeting that which gathers close upon us
Perchance one day the sooner!—Is it not so?
Must we not yield at last? How long shall man
Array his single breast against disease,
And famine, and the sword?
Her. How long?—While He
Who shadows forth His power more gloriously
In the high deeds and sufferings of the soul,
Than in the circling heavens, with all their stars,
Or the far-sounding deep, doth send abroad
A spirit, which takes affliction for its mate,
In the good cause, with solemn joy!—How long?
—And who art *thou*, that, in the littleness
Of thine own selfish purpose, wouldst set bounds
To the free current of all noble thought
And generous action, bidding its bright waves
Be stayed, and flow no further?—But the Power
Whose interdict is laid on seas and orbs,
To chain them in from wandering, hath assigned
No limits unto that which man's high strength
Shall, through its aid, achieve!
Elm. Oh! there are times,
When *all* that hopeless courage can achieve
But sheds a mournful beauty o'er the fate
Of those who die in vain.
Her. *Who* dies in vain

Upon his country's war-fields, and within
The shadow of her altars?—Feeble heart!
I tell thee that the voice of noble blood,
Thus poured for faith and freedom, hath a tone
Which, from the night of ages, from the gulf
Of death, shall burst, and make its high appeal
Sound unto earth and heaven! Ay, let the land,
Whose sons, through centuries of woe, have striven,
And perished by her temples, sink awhile,
Borne down in conflict! But immortal seed
Deep, by heroic suffering, hath been sown
On all her ancient hills; and generous hope
Knows that the soil, in its good time, shall yet
Bring forth a glorious harvest! Earth receives
Not one red drop from faithful hearts in vain.
Elm. Then it must be!—And ye will make those lives
Those young bright lives, an offering—to retard
Our doom one day!
Her. The mantle of that day
May wrap the fate of Spain!
Elm. What led me here?
Why did I turn to *thee* in my despair?
Love hath no ties upon thee; what had I
To hope from *thee*, thou lone and childless man!
Go to thy silent home!—there no young voice
Shall bid thee welcome, no light footstep spring
Forth at the sound of thine!—What knows thy heart?
Her. Woman! how darest thou taunt me with my woes?
Thy children too shall perish, and I say
It shall be well! Why takest thou thought for them?
Wearing thy heart, and wasting down thy life
Unto its dregs, and making night thy time
Of care yet more intense, and casting health,
Unprized, to melt away, i' the bitter cup
Thou minglest for thyself?—Why, what have earth
To pay thee back for this? Shall they not live
(If the sword spare them now) to prove how soon
All love may be forgotten? Years of thought,
Long faithful watchings, looks of tenderness,
That changed not, though to change be this world's law-
Shall they not flush thy cheek with shame, whose blood
Marks, e'en like branding iron?—to thy sick heart
Make death a want, as sleep to weariness?
Doth not all hope end thus?—or e'en at best
Will they not leave thee?—far from thee seek room
For the o'erflowings of their fiery souls,
On life's wide ocean? Give the bounding steed.
Or the winged bark to youth, that his free course
May be o'er hills and seas; and weep thou not
In thy forsaken home, for the bright world
Lies all before him, and be sure he wastes
No thought on thee!
Elm. Not so! it is not so!
Thou dost but torture me! *My* sons are kind,
And brave, and gentle.

Her. Others, too, have worn
The semblance of all good. Nay, stay thee yet;
I will be calm, and thou shalt learn how earth,
The fruitful in all agonies, hath woes
Which far outweigh thine own.
Elm. It may not be!
Whose grief is like a mother's for her sons?
Her. My son lay stretched upon his battle-bier,
And there were hands wrung o'er him which had caught
Their hue from his young blood!
Elm. What tale is this?
Her. Read you no records in this mien, of things
Whose traces on man's aspect are not such
As the breeze leaves on water? Lofty birth,
War, peril, power?—Affliction's hand is strong,
If it erase the haughty characters
They grave so deep!—I have not always been
That which I am. The name I bore is not
Of those which perish!—I was once a chief—
A warrior—not as now, a lonely man!
I was a father!
Elm. Then thy heart can *feel!*
Thou wilt have pity!
Her. Should I pity *thee?*
Thy sons will perish ingloriously—their blood——
Elm Their blood! my children's blood—Thou speakest
as 'twere
Of casting down a wine-cup, in the mirth
And wantonness of feasting!—my fair boys!
—Man! hast *thou* been a father?
Her. Let them die!
Let them die *now*, thy children, so thy heart
Shall wear their beautiful image all undimmed
Within it, to the last! Nor shalt thou learn
The bitter lesson, of what worthless dust
Are framed the idols, whose false glory binds
Earth's fetters on our souls! Thou thinkest it much
To mourn the early dead; but there are tears
Heavy with deeper anguish! We endow
Those whom we love, in our fond passionate blindness,
With power upon our souls, too absolute
To be a mortal's trust! Within their hands
We lay the flaming sword, whose stroke alone
Can reach our hearts, and *they* are merciful,
As they are strong, that wield it not to pierce us!
—Ay, fear them, fear the loved! Had I but wept
O'er my son's grave, or o'er a babe's, where tears
Are as spring dewdrops, glittering in the sun,
And brightening the young verdure, I might still
Have loved and trusted!
Elm. (*disdainfully*). But he fell in war!
And hath not glory medicine in her cup
For the brief pangs of nature?
Her. Glory!—Peace,

And listen !—By my side the stripling grew,
Last of my line. I reared him to take joy
I' the blaze of arms, as eagles train their young
To look upon the day-king ! His quick blood
Even to his boyish cheek would mantle up,
When the heavens rang with trumpets, and his eye
Flash with the spirit of a race whose deeds—
But this availeth not ! Yet he *was* brave.
I've seen him clear himself a path in fight
As lightning through a forest, and his plume
Waved like a torch, above the battle-storm,
The soldier's guide, when princely crest had sunk,
And banners were struck down. Around my steps
Floated his fame, like music, and I lived
But in the lofty sound. But when my heart
In one frail ark had ventured all, when most
He seemed to stand between my soul and heaven,
—Then came the thunder-stroke !
Elm. 'Tis ever thus !
And the unquiet and foreboding sense
That thus 'twill ever be, doth link itself
Darkly with all deep love !—He died ?
Her. Not so !
—Death ! Death !—Why, earth should be a paradise,
To make that name so fearful ! Had he died,
With his young fame about him for a shroud
I had not learned the might of agony,
To bring proud natures low ! No ! he fell off—
Why do I tell thee this ;—what right hast *thou*
To learn how passed the glory from my house ?
Yet listen !—He forsook me ! He, that was
As mine own soul, forsook me ! trampled o'er
The ashes of his sires !—ay, leagued himself
E'en with the infidel, the curse of Spain ;
And, for the dark eye of a Moorish maid,
Abjured his faith, his God !—Now, talk of death !
Elm. Oh ! I can pity thee——
Her. There's more to hear.
I braced the corslet o'er my heart's deep wound,
And cast my troubled spirit on the tide
Of war and high events, whose stormy waves
Might bear it up from sinking ;——
Elm. And ye met
No more ?
Her. Be still ! we did ! we met *once* more.
God had his own high purpose to fulfil,
Or thinkest thou that the sun in his bright heaven
Had looked upon such things ? We met *once more.*
That was an hour to leave its lightning-mark
Seared upon brain and bosom ! There had been
Combat on Ebro's banks, and when the day
Sank in red clouds, it faded from a field
Still held by Moorish lances. Night closed round—
A night of sultry darkness, in the shadow

Of whose broad wing, e'en unto death, I strove
Long with a turbaned champion ; but my sword
Was heavy with God's vengeance—and prevailed.
He fell—my heart exulted—and I stood
In gloomy triumph o'er him. Nature gave
No sign of horror, for 'twas Heaven's decree!
He strove to speak—but I had done the work
Of wrath too well ;—yet in his last deep moan
A dreadful something of familiar sound
Came o'or my shuddering sense. The moon looked forth,
And I beheld—speak not ! 'twas he—my son !
My boy lay dying there ! He raised one glance,
And knew me—for he sought with feeble hand
To cover his glazed eyes. A darker veil
Sank o'er them soon.—I will not have thy look
Fixed on me thus ! Away !
Elm. Thou hast seen this,
Thou hast *done* this—and yet thou livest?
Her. I live !
And knowest thou wherefore ?—On my soul there fell
A horror of great darkness, which shut out
All earth, and heaven, and hope. I cast away
The spear and helm, and made the cloister's shade
The home of my despair. But a deep voice
Came to me through the gloom, and sent its tones
Far through my bosom's depths. And I awoke,
Ay, as the mountain-cedar doth shake off
Its weight of wintry snow, e'en so I shook
Despondence from my soul, and knew myself
Sealed by that blood wherewith my hands were dyed,
And set apart, and fearfully marked out
Unto a mighty task !—To 'rouse the soul
Of Spain as from the dead ; and to lift up
The cross, her sign of victory, on the hills,
Gathering her sons to battle ! And my voice
Must be as freedom's trumpet on the winds,
From Roncesvalles to the blue sea-waves
Where Calpe looks on Afric ; till the land
Have filled her cup of vengeance !—Ask me *now*
To yield the Christian city, that its fanes
May rear the minaret in the face of heaven !—
But death shall have a bloodier vintage-feast
Ere that day come !
Elm. I ask thee this no more,
For I am hopeless now. But yet one boon—
Hear me, by all thy woes ! Thy voice hath power
Through the wide city—here I cannot rest :—
Aid me to pass the gates !
Her. And wherefore ?
Elm. Thou,
That *wert* a father, and art now—alone !
Canst *thou* ask "wherefore?"—Ask the wretch whose sands
Have not an hour to run, whose failing limbs
Have but one earthly journey to perform,

Why, on his pathway to the place of death,
Ay, when the very axe is glistening cold
Upon his dizzy sight, his pale, parched lip
Implores a cup of water? Why, the stroke
Which trembles o'er him in itself shall bring
Oblivion of all wants, yet who denies
Nature's last prayer? I tell thee that the thirst
Which burns my spirit up is agony
To be endured no more! And I *must* look
Upon my children's faces, I must hear
Their voices, ere they perish!—But hath Heaven
Decreed that they *must* perish? Who shall say
If in yon Moslem camp there beats no heart
Which prayers and tears may melt?

Her. There!—with the Moor!
Let him fill up the measure of his guilt!
—'Tis madness all! How wouldst thou pass the array
Of armed foes?

Elm. Oh! free doth sorrow pass,
Free and unquestioned, through a suffering world!

Her. This must not be. Enough of woe is laid
E'en now upon thy lord's heroic soul,
For man to bear, unsinking. Press thou not
Too heavily the o'erburthened heart.—Away!
Bow down the knee, and send thy prayers for strength
Up to Heaven's gate.—Farewell! [*Exit* HERNANDEZ.

Elm. Are all men thus?
Why, were it not better they should fall e'en now
Than live to shut their hearts, in haughty scorn,
Against the sufferer's pleadings? But no, no!
Who can be like *this* man, that slew his son,
Yet wears his life still proudly, and a soul
Untamed upon his brow?

(*After a pause.*)

There's one, whose arm
Have borne my children in their infancy,
And on whose knees they sported, and whose hand
Hath led them oft—a vassal of their sires;
And I will seek him: he may lend me aid,
When all beside pass on.

DIRGE, HEARD WITHOUT.

Thou to thy rest are gone,
High heart! and what are we,
While o'er our heads the storm sweeps on,
That we should mourn for thee?

Free grave and peaceful bier
To the buried son of Spain!
To those that live, the lance and spear,
And well if not the chain!

Be *theirs* to weep the dead,
As they sit beneath their vines,
Whose flowery land hath borne no tread
Of spoilers o'er its shrines!

Thou hast thrown off the load
Which we must yet sustain,
And pour our blood where *thine* hath flowed,
Too blest if not in vain!

We give thee holy rite,
Slow knell, and chanted strain,
For those that fall to-morrow night,
May be left no funeral-train.

Again, when trumpets wake,
We must brace our armor on;
But a deeper note *thy* sleep must break—
Thou to thy rest art gone!

Happier in *this* than all,
That, now thy race is run,
Upon thy name no stain may fall,
Thy work hath well been done!

Elm. "Thy work hath well been done!"—so thou may'st rest!—
There is a solemn lesson in those words—
But now I may not pause. [*Exit* ELMINA.

SCENE III.—*A Street in the City.*

HERNANDEZ—GONZALEZ.

Her. Would they not hear?
Gon. They heard, as one that stands
By the cold grave which hath but newly closed
O'er his last friend doth hear some passer-by
Bid him be comforted!—Their hearts have died
Within them!—We must perish, not as those
That fall when battle's voice doth shake the hills,
And peal through heaven's great arch, but silently,
And with a wasting of the spirit down,
A quenching, day by day, of some bright spark,
Which lit us on our toils!—Reproach me not;
My soul is darkened with a heavy cloud—
Yet fear not I shall yield!
Her. Breathe not the word,
Save in proud scorn! Each bitter day o'erpassed
By slow endurance, is a triumph won
For Spain's red cross. And be of trusting heart!
A few brief hours, and those that turned away
In cold despondence, shrinking from your voice,
May crowd around their leader, and demand

To be arrayed for battle. We must watch
For the swift impulse, and await its time,
As the bark waits the ocean's. You have chosen
To kindle up their souls, an hour, perchance,
When they were weary ; they had cast aside
Their arms to slumber ; or a knell, just then,
With its deep hollow tone, had made the blood
Creep shuddering through their veins ; or they had caught
A glimpse of some new meteor, and shaped forth
Strange omens from its blaze.
Gon. Alas ! the cause
Lies deeper in their misery !—I have seen,
In my night's course through this beleaguered city,
Things whose remembrance doth not pass away
As vapors from the mountains.—There were some,
That sat beside their dead, with eyes wherein
Grief had ta'en place of sight, and shut out all
But its own ghastly object. To my voice
Some answered with a fierce and bitter laugh,
As men whose agonies were made to pass
The bounds of sufferance, by some reckless word,
Dropt from the light of spirit. Others lay—
Why should I tell thee, father ! how despair
Can bring the lofty brow of manhood down
Unto the very dust ? And yet for this,
Fear not that I embrace my doom—Oh God !
That 'twere *my* doom alone !—with less of fixed
And solemn fortitude. Lead on, prepare
The holiest rites of faith, that I by them
Once more may consecrate my sword, my life ;—
But what are these ? Who hath not dearer lives
Twined with his own ? I shall be lonely soon—
Childless !—Heaven wills it so. Let us begone.
Perchance before the shrine my heart may beat
With a less troubled motion.

[*Exeunt* GONZALEZ *and* HERNANDEZ.

SCENE IV.—*A Tent in the Moorish Camp.*

ABDULIAH—ALPHONSO—CARLOS.

Abd. These are bold words : but hast thou looked on death,
Fair stripling ?—On thy cheek and sunny brow
Scarce fifteen summers of their laughing course
Have left light traces. If thy shaft hath pierced
The ibex of the mountains, if thy step
Hath climbed some eagle's nest, and thou hast made
His nest thy spoil, 'tis much !—And fear'st thou not
The leader of the mighty ?
Alph. I have been
Reared amongst fearless men, and midst the rocks
And the wild hills, whereon my fathers fought
And won their battles. There are glorious tales
Told of their deeds, and I have learned them all.
How should I fear thee, Moor ?

Abd. So, thou hast seen
Fields, where the combat's roar hath died away
Into the whispering breeze, and where wild flowers
Bloom o'er forgotten graves!—But knowest thou aught
Of those, where sword from crossing sword strikes fire,
And leaders are borne down, and rushing steeds
Trample the life from out the mighty hearts
That ruled the storm so late?—Speak not of death
Till thou hast looked on such.
Alph. I was not born
A shepherd's son, to dwell with pipe and crook,
And peasant men, amidst the lowly vales;
Instead of ringing clarions, and bright spears,
And crested knights! I am of princely race;
And, if my father would have heard my suit,
I tell thee, infidel, that long ere now,
I should have seen how lances meet, and swords
Do the field's work.
Abd. Boy!—knowest thou there are sights
A thousand times more fearful? Men may die
Full proudly when the skies and mountains ring
To battle-horn and tecbir.[1] But not all
So pass away in glory. There are those,
'Midst the dead silence of pale multitudes,
Led forth in fetters—dost thou mark me, boy?
To take their last look of the all-gladdening sun,
And bow, perchance, the stately head of youth
Unto the death of shame!—Hadst thou seen this—
Alph. (*to Carlos*). Sweet brother, God is with us; fear thou not!
We have had heroes for our sires:—this man
Should not behold us tremble.
Abd. There are means
To tame the loftiest natures. Yet, again
I ask thee, wilt thou, from beneath the walls
Sue to thy sire for life?—or wouldst thou die
With this thy brother!
Alph. Moslem!—on the hills.
Around my father's castle, I have heard
The mountain-peasants, as they dressed the vines,
Or drove the goats, by rock and torrent, home,
Singing their ancient songs; and these were all
Of the Cid Campeador; and how his sword
Tizona, cleared its way through turbaned hosts,
And captured Afric's king's, and how he won
Valencia from the Moor—I will not shame
The blood we draw from him!

(*A Moorish soldier enters.*)

Sol. Valencia's lord
Sends messengers, my chief.
Abd. Conduct them hither.

[*The Soldier goes out and re-enters with* ELMINA, *disguised, and an attendant.*

[1] *Tecbir*, the war-cry of the Moors and Arabs.

Car. (*springing forward to the attendant*). Oh! take me
hence, Diego? take me hence
With thee, that I may see my mother's face
At morning when I wake. Here dark-browed men
Frown strangely, with their cruel eyes, upon us.
Take me with thee, for thou art good and kind,
And well I know thou lovest me, my Diego!
Abd. Peace, boy! What tidings, Christian, from thy lord?
Is he grown humbler?—doth he set the lives
Of these fair nurselings at a city's worth?
Alph. (*rushing forward impatiently*). Say not he
doth!—Yet wherefore art thou here?
If it be so, I could weep burning tears
For very shame! if this *can* be, return!
Tell him, of all his wealth, his battle-spoils,
I will but ask a war-horse and a sword,
And that beside him in the mountain-chase,
And in his halls, and at his stately feasts,
My place shall be no more!—But, no! I wrong,
I wrong my father! Moor, believe it not,
He is a champion of the cross and Spain,
Sprung from the Cid!—and I, too, I can die
As a warrior's high-born child!
Elm. Alas, alas!
And wouldst thou die, thus early die, fair boy?
What hath life done to thee, that thou shouldst cast
Its flower away, in very scorn of heart,
Ere yet the blight be come?
Alph. That voice doth sound——
Abd. Stranger, who art thou?—this is mockery! speak!
Elm. (*throwing off a mantle and helmet, and embracing
her sons.*) My boys! whom I have reared through
many hours
Of silent joys and sorrows, and deep thoughts
Untold and unimagined; let me die
With you, now I have held you to my heart,
And seen once more the faces, in whose light
My soul hath lived for years!
Car. Sweet mother! now
Thou shalt not leave us more.
Abd. Enough of this!
Woman! what seekst thou here! How hast thou dared
To front the mighty thus amidst his hosts?
Elm. Thinkst thou there dwells no courage but in breasts
That set their mail against the ringing spears,
When helmets are struck down? Thou little knowst
Of nature's marvels. Chief, my heart is nerved
To make its way through things which warrior men,
Ay, they that master death by field or flood,
Would look on, ere they braved!—I have no thought,
No sense of fear! Thou'rt mighty! but a soul
Wound up like mine is mightier, in the power
Of that one feeling poured through all its depths,
Than monarchs with their hosts! Am I not come
To die with these my children?

Abd. Doth thy faith
Bid thee do this, fond Christian? Hast thou not
The means to save them?
Elm. I have prayers, and tears,
And agonies!—and he, my God; the God
Whose hand, or soon or late, doth find its hour
To bow the crested head—hath made these things
Most powerful in a world where all must learn
That one deep language, by the storm called forth
From the bruised reeds of earth! For thee, perchance,
Affliction's chastening lesson hath not yet
Been laid upon thy heart, and thou mayst love
To see the creatures, by its might brought low,
Humbled before thee. [*She throws herself at his feet.*
Conqueror, I can kneel!
I, that drew birth from princes, bow myself
E'en to thy feet! Call in thy chiefs, thy slaves,
If this will swell thy triumph, to behold
The blood of kings, of heroes, thus abased!
Do this, but spare my sons!
Alph. (*attempting to raise her*). Thou shouldst not kneel
Unto this infidel! Rise, rise, my mother!
This sight doth shame our house!
Abd. Thou daring boy!
They that in arms have taught thy father's land
How chains are worn, shall school that haughty mien
Unto another language.
Elm. Peace, my son!
Have pity on my heart!—Oh, pardon chief!
He is of noble blood. Hear, hear me yet
Are there no lives through which the shafts of Heaven
May reach your soul? He that loves aught on earth,
Dares far too much, if he be merciless!
Is it for those, whose frail mortality
Must one day strive alone with God and death,
To shut their souls against the appealing voice
Of nature, in her anguish?—warrior, man,
To you, too, ay, and haply with your hosts,
By thousands and ten thousands marshalled round,
And your strong armor on, shall come that stroke
Which the lance wards not!—where shall your high heart
Find refuge then, if in the day of might
Woe hath lain prostrate, bleeding at your feet,
And you have pitied not?
Abd. These are vain words.
Elm. Have you no children?—fear you not to bring
The lightning on their heads? In your own land
Doth no fond mother, from the tents beneath
Your native palms, look o'er the deserts out,
To greet your homeward step? You have not yet
Forgot so utterly her patient love;—
For is not woman's in all climes the same?
That you should scorn *my* prayer!—O Heaven! his eye
Doth wear no mercy!

Abd. Then it mocks you not.
I have swept o'er the mountains of your land,
Leaving my traces, as the visitings
Of storms upon them! Shall I now be stayed?
Know, unto me it were as light a thing
In this my course, to quench your children's lives,
As, journeying through a forest, to break off
The young wild branches that obstruct the way
With their green sprays and leaves.
Elm. Are there such hearts
Amongst thy works, O God?
Abd. Kneel not to me.
Kneel to your lord! on his resolves doth hang
His children's doom. He may be lightly won
By a few bursts of passionate tears and words.
Elm. (*rising indignantly*). Speak not of noble men!—
He bears a soul
Stronger than love or death.
Alph. (*with exultation*). I knew 'twas thus!
He could not fail!
Elm. There is no mercy, none,
On this cold earth!—To strive with such a world,
Hearts should be void of love!—We will go hence,
My children! we are summoned. Lay your heads,
In their young radiant beauty, once again
To rest upon this bosom. He that dwells
Beyond the clouds which press us darkly round,
Will yet have pity, and before his face
We three will stand together! Moslem! now
Let the stroke fall at once!
Abd. 'Tis thine own will.
These might e'en yet be spared.
Elm. *Thou* wilt not spare!
And he beneath whose eye their childhood grew,
And in whose paths they sported, and whose ear
From their first lisping accents caught the sound
Of that word—*Father*—once a name of love—
Is——Men shall call him *steadfast*.
Abd. Hath the blast
Of sudden trumpets ne'er at dead of night,
When the land's watchers feared no hostile step,
Startled the slumberers from their dreamy world,
In cities, whose heroic lords have been
Steadfast as thine?
Elm. There's meaning in thine eye,
More than thy words.
Abd. (*pointing to the city*). Look to yon towers and walls!
Think you no hearts within their limits pine,
Weary of hopeless warfare, and prepared
To burst the feeble links which bind them still
Unto endurance?
Elm. Thou hast said too well.
But what of this?
Abd. Then there are those, to whom

The prophet's armies not as foes would pass
Yon gates, but as deliverers. Might they not
In some still hour, when weariness takes rest,
Be won to welcome us? Your children's steps
May yet bound lightly through their father's halls!
Alph. (*indignantly*). Thou treacherous Moor!
Elm. Let me not thus be tried
Beyond all strength, oh, Heaven!
Abd. Now, 'tis for *thee*,
Thou Christian mother! on thy sons to pass
The sentence—life or death!—the price is set
On their young blood, and rests within thy hands.
Alph. Mother! thou tremblest!
Abd. Hath thy heart resolved?
Elm. (*covering her face with her hands*). My boy's proud eye
is on me, and the things
Which rush in stormy darkness through my soul,
Shrink from his glance. I cannot answer *here*.
Abd. Come forth. We'll commune elsewhere.
Car. (*to his mother*). Wilt thou go?
Oh! let me follow thee!
Elm. Mine own fair child!
Now that thine eyes have poured once more on mine
The light of their young smile, and thy sweet voice
Hath sent its gentle music through my soul,
And I have felt the twining of thine arms—
How shall I leave thee?
Abd. Leave him as 'twere but
For a brief slumber, to behold his face
At morning, with the sun's.
Alph. Thou hast no look
For me, my mother!
Elm. Oh! that I should live
To say, I *dare* not look on thee!—Farewell,
My first-born, fare thee well!
Alph. Yet, yet beware!
It were a grief more heavy on thy soul,
That I should blush for thee, than o'er my grave
That thou shouldst proudly weep!
Abd. Away! we trifle here. The night wanes fast.
Come forth!
Elm. Once more embrace! My sons, farewell!
[*Exeunt* ABDULLAH *with* ELMINA *and her attendant.*
Alph. Hear me yet once, my mother!—Art thou gone?
But one word more! [*He rushes out, followed by* CARLOS.

SCENE V.—*The Garden of a Palace in Valencia.*

XIMENA, THERESA.

Ther. Stay yet awhile. A purer air doth rove
Here through the myrtles whispering, and the limes,
And shaking sweetness from the orange-boughs,
Than waits you in the city.

Xim. There are those
In their last need, and on their bed of death,
At which no hand doth minister but mine,
That wait me in the city. Let us hence.
Ther. You have been wont to love the music made
By founts, and rustling foliage, and soft winds,
Breathing of citron-groves. And will you turn
From these to scenes of death?
Xim. To me the voice
Of summer, whispering through young flowers and leaves
Now speaks too deep a language! and of all
Its dreamy and mysterious melodies,
The breathing soul is sadness! I have felt
That summons through my spirit, after which
The hues of earth are changed, and all her sounds
Seem fraught with secret warnings.—There is cause
That I should bend my footsteps to the scenes
Where Death is busy, taming warrior hearts
And pouring winter through the fiery blood,
And fettering the strong arm! For now no sigh
In the dull air, nor floating cloud in heaven,
No, not the lightest murmur of a leaf,
But of his angel's silent coming bears
Some token to my soul.—But nought of this
Unto my mother! These are awful hours!
And on their heavy steps afflictions crowd
With such dark pressure, there is left no room
For one grief more.
Ther. Sweet lady, talk not thus!
Your eye this morn doth wear a calmer light,
There's more of life in its clear tremulous ray
Than I have marked of late. Nay, go not yet;
Rest by this fountain, where the laurels dip
Their glossy leaves. A fresher gale doth spring
From the transparent waters, dashing round
Their silvery spray, with a sweet voice of coolness
O'er the pale glistening marble. 'Twill call up
Faint bloom, if but a moment's, to your cheek.
Rest here, ere you go forth, and I will sing
The melody you love.

(THERESA *sings.*)

Why is the Spanish maiden's grave
So far from her own bright land?
The sunny flowers that o'er it wave
Were sown by no kindred hand.

'Tis not the orange-bough that sends
Its breath on the sultry air,
'Tis not the myrtle-stem that bends
To the breeze of evening there!

But the rose of Sharon's eastern bloom
By the silent dwelling fades,
And none but strangers pass the tomb
Which the palm of Judah shades.

The lowly Cross, with flowers o'ergrown,
Marks well that place of rest;
But who hath graved, on its mossy stone,
A sword, a helm, a crest?

These are the trophies of a chief,
A lord of the axe and spear!
Some blossom plucked, some faded leaf,
Should grace a maiden's bier!

Scorn not her tomb—deny not her
The honors of the brave!
O'er that forsaken sepulchre,
Banner and plume might wave.

She bound the steel, in battle tried,
Her fearless heart above,
And stood with brave men, side by side,
In the strength and faith of love!

That strength prevailed—that faith was blessed!
True was the javelin thrown,
Yet pierced it not her warrior's breast:
She met it with her own!

And nobly won, where heroes fell
In arms for the holy shrine,
A death which saved what she loved so well,
And a grave in Palestine.

Then let the rose of Sharon spread
Its breast to the glowing air,
And the palm of Judah lift its head,
Green and immortal there!

And let yon gray stone, undefaced,
With its trophy mark the scene,
Telling the pilgrim of the waste,
Where Love and Death have been.

Xim. Those notes were wont to make my heart beat quick,
As at a voice of victory; but to-day
The spirit of the song is changed, and seems
All mournful. Oh! that, ere my early grave
Shuts out the sunbeam, I might hear one peal
Of the Castilian trumpet, ringing forth
Beneath my father's banner! In that sound
Were life to you, sweet brothers! But for me—
Come on—our tasks await us. They who know

Their hours are numbered out, have little time
To give the vague and slumberous languor way,
Which doth steal o'er them in the breath of flowers,
And whisper of soft winds.

(ELMINA *enters hurriedly.*)

Elm. The air will calm my spirit, ere yet I meet
His eye, which must be met. Thou here, Ximena!
[*She starts back on seeing* XIMENA.
Xim. Alas! my mother! In that hurrying step
And troubled glance I read——
Elm. (*wildly*). Thou readest it not!
Why, who would live, if unto mortal eye
The things lay glaring, which within our hearts
We treasure up for God's? Thou readest it not!
I say, thou canst not! There's not one on earth
Shall know the thoughts, which for themselves have made
And kept dark places in the very breast
Whereon he hath laid his slumber, till the hour
When the graves open?
Xim. Mother! what is this?
Alas! your eye is wandering, and your cheek
Flushed, as with fever! To your woes the night
Hath brought no rest.
Elm. Rest!—who should rest?—not he
That holds one earthly blessing to his heart
Nearer than life! No! if this world have aught
Of bright or precious, let not him who calls
Such things his own, take rest! Dark spirits keep watch,
And they to whom fair honor, chivalrous fame,
Were as heaven's air, the vital element
Wherein they breathed, may wake, and find their souls
Made marks for human scorn! Will they bear on
With life struck down, and thus disrobed of all
Its glorious drapery?—Who shall tell us this?—
Will *he* so bear it?
Xim. Mother! let us kneel
And blend our hearts in prayer!—What else is left
To mortals when the dark hour's might is on them?
—Leave us, Theresa. Grief like this doth find
Its balm in solitude.
My mother! peace
Is heaven's benignant answer to the cry
Of wounded spirits. Wilt thou kneel with me?
Elm. Away! 'tis but for souls unstained, to wear
Heaven's tranquil image on their depths—The stream
Of my dark thoughts, all broken by the storm,
Reflects but clouds and lightnings! Didst thou speak
Of peace?—'tis fled from earth!—but there is joy!
Wild, troubled joy! And who shall know, my child!
It is not happiness?—Why, our own hearts
Will keep the secret close! Joy, joy! if but
To leave this desolate city, with its dull
Low knells and dirges, and to breathe again

The untainted mountain air!—But hush! the trees,
The flowers, the waters, must hear naught of this!
They are full of voices, and will whisper things———
—We'll speak of it no more.
Xim. Oh! pitying Heaven!
This grief doth shake her reason!
Elm. (*starting*). Hark a step!
'Tis—'tis thy father's!—come away—not now—
He must not see us now!
Xim. Why should this be?

(GONZALEZ *enters, and detains* ELMINA.)

Gon. Elmina, dost thou shun me? Have we not,
E'en from the hopeful and the sunny time
When youth was as a glory round our brows,
Held on through life together? And is this,
When eve is gathering round us, with the gloom
Of stormy clouds, a time to part our steps
Upon the darkening wild;
Elm. (*coldly*). There needs not this.
Why shouldst thou think I shunned thee?
Gon. Should the love
That shone o'er many years, the unfading love,
Whose only change hath been from gladdening smiles
To mingling sorrows and sustaining strength,
Thus lightly be forgotten?
Elm. Speakest *thou* thus?
—I have knelt before thee with that very plea,
When it availed me not!—But there are things
Whose very breathings from the soul erase
All record of past love, save the chill sense,
The unquiet memory of its wasted faith,
And vain devotedness!—Ay! they that fix
Affection's perfect trust on aught of earth,
Have many a dream to start from!
Gon. This is but
The wildness and the bitterness of grief,
Ere yet the unsettled heart hath closed its long
Impatient conflicts with a mightier power,
Which makes all conflict vain.
Hark! was there not
A sound of distant trumpets, far beyond
The Moorish tents, and of another tone
Than the Afric horn, Ximena?
Xim. Oh, my father,
I know that horn too well. 'Tis but the wind,
Which, with a sudden rising, bears its deep
And savage war note from us, wafting it
O'er the far hills.
Gon. Alas! this woe must be!
I do not shake my spirit from its height,
So startling it with hope! But the dread hour
Shall be met bravely still. I can keep down
Yet for a little while—and Heaven will ask

No more—the passionate workings of my heart—
And thine—Elmina?
Elm. 'Tis—I am prepared.
I *have* prepared for all.
Gon. Oh, well I knew
Thou wouldst not fail me! Not in vain my soul,
Upon thy faith and courage, hath built up
Unshaken trust.
Elm. (*wildly*). Away! thou knowest me not!
Man dares too far, his rashness would invest
This our mortality with an attribute
Too high and awful, boasting that he knows
One human heart!
Gon. These are wild words, but yet
I will not doubt thee!—Hast thou not been found
Noble in all things, pouring thy soul's light
Undimmed o'er every trial? And, as our fates
So must our names be, undivided! Thine,
In the record of a warrior's life, shall find
Its place of stainless honor. By his side—
Elm. May this be borne?—How much of agony
Hath the heart room for? Speak to me in wrath
—I can endure it! But no gentle words!
No words of love! no praise! Thy sword might slay
And be more merciful!
Gon. Wherefore art thou thus?
Elmina, my beloved!
Elm. No more of love!
Have I not said there's that within my heart,
Whereon it falls as living fire would fall
Upon an unclosed wound?
Gon. Nay, lift thine eyes,
That I may read *their* meaning!
Elm. Never more
With a free soul—What have I said?—'twas naught.
Take thou no heed! The words of wretchedness
Admit not scrutiny. Wouldst thou mark the speech
Of troubled dreams?
Gon. I have seen thee in the hour
Of thy deep spirit's joy, and when the breath
Of grief hung chilling round thee; in all change,
Bright health and drooping sickness; hope and fear;
Youth and decline; but never yet, Elmina,
Ne'er hath thine eye till now shrunk back perturbed
With shame or dread, from mine!
Elm. Thy glance doth search
A wounded heart too deeply.
Gon. Hast thou there
Aught to conceal?
Elm. Who hath not?
Gon. Till this hour
Thou never hadst!—Yet hear me!—by the free
And unattainted fame which wraps the dust
Of thine heroic fathers—

Elm. This to me!
Bring your inspiring war-notes, and your sounds
Of festal music round a dying man!
Will his heart echo them?—But if thy words
Were spells, to call up, with each lofty tone,
The grave's most awful spirits, they would stand
Powerless, before my anguish!
Gon. Then, by her,
Who there looks on thee in the purity
Of her devoted youth, and o'er whose name
No blight must fall, and whose pale cheek must ne'er
Burn with that deeper tinge, caught painfully
From the quick feeling of dishonor.—Speak!
Unfold this mystery!—By thy sons—
Elm. My sons!
And canst *thou* name them?
Gon. Proudly!—Better far
They died with all the promise of their youth,
And the fair honor of their house upon them,
Than that, with manhood's high and passionate soul,
To fearful strength unfolded, they should live
Barred from the lists of crested chivalry,
And pining, in the silence of a woe,
Which from the heart shuts daylight—o'er the shame
Of those who gave them birth!—but *thou* couldst ne'er
Forget their lofty claims!
Elm. (*wildly*). 'Twas but for them!
'Twas for them only!—Who shall dare arraign
Madness of crime? And He who made us knows,
There are dark moments of all hearts and lives,
Which bear down reason!
Gon. Thou, whom I have loved
With such high trust as o'er our nature threw
A glory scarce allowed;—what hast thou done?—
Ximena, go thou hence!
Elm. No, no! my child!
There's pity in thy look! All other eyes
Are full of wrath and scorn!—Oh! leave me not!
Gon. That I should live to see thee thus abased!
—Yet speak!—what hast thou done?
Elm. Look to the gate!
Thou'rt worn with toil—but take no rest to-night!
The western gate!—Its watchers have been won—
The Christian city hath been bought and sold!—
They will admit the Moor!
Gon. They have been won!
Brave men and tried so long!—Whose work was this?
Elm. Thinkest thou all hearts like thine?—Can mothers stand
To see their children perish?
Gon. Then the guilt
Was thine?
Elm. Shall mortal dare to call it guilt?
I tell thee, Heaven, which made all holy things
Made naught more holy than the boundless love

Which fills a mother's heart!—I say, 'tis woe
Enough, with such an aching tenderness,
To love aught earthly!—and in vain! in vain!
—We are pressed down too sorely!
Gon. (*in a low desponding voice*). Now my life
Is struck to worthless ashes!—In my soul
Suspicion hath taken root. The nobleness
Henceforth is blotted from all human brows;
And fearful power, a dark and troublous gift,
Almost like prophecy, is poured upon me,
To read the guilty secrets in each eye
That once looked bright with truth!
—Why, then, I have gained
What men call wisdom!—A new sense, to which
All tales that speak of high fidelity,
And holy courage, and proud honor, tried,
Searched, and found steadfast, even to martyrdom,
Are food for mockery! Why should I not cast
From my thinned locks the wearing helm at once,
And in the heavy sickness of my soul
Throw the sword down forever? Is there aught
In all this world of gilded hollowness,
Now the bright hues drop off its loveliest things,
Worth striving for again?
Xim. Father! look up!
Turn unto me, thy child!
Gon. Thy face is fair!
And hath been unto me, in other days,
As morning to the journeyer of the deep;
But now—'tis too like hers!
Elm. (*falling at his feet*). Woe, shame and woe,
Are on me in their might!—forgive, forgive!
Gon. (*starting up*). Doth the Moor deem that *I* have part or share,
Or counsel in this vileness? Stay me not!
Let go thy hold—'tis powerless on me now—
Linger here, while treason is at work! [*Exit* GONZALEZ.
Elm. Ximena, dost *thou* scorn me?
Xim. I have found
In mine own heart too much of feebleness,
Hid, beneath many foldings, from all eyes
But His whom naught can blind, to dare do aught
But pity thee, dear mother!
Elm. Blessings light
On thy fair head, my gentle child, for this!
Thou kind and merciful!—My soul is faint—
Worn with long strife! Is there aught else to do,
Or suffer, ere we die? O God! my sons!—
I have betrayed them! All their innocent blood
Is on my soul!
Xim. How shall I comfort thee?
—Oh! hark! what sounds come deepening on the wind,
So full of solemn hope!
(*A procession of Nuns passes across the Scene bearing relics, and chanting.*)

CHANT.

A sword is on the land !
He that bears down young tree and glorious flower,
Death is gone forth, he walks the wind in power !
Where is the warrior's hand ?
Our steps are in the shadows of the grave,
Hear us, we perish ! Father, hear and save !

If, in the days of song,
The days of gladness, we have called on Thee,
When mirthful voices rang from sea to sea,
And joyous hearts were strong ;
Now that alike the feeble and the brave
Must cry, " We perish ! "—Father, hear and save !

The days of song are fled !
The winds come loaded, wafting dirge-notes by,
But they that linger soon unmourned must die ;—
The dead weep not the dead !—
Wilt thou forsake us 'midst the stormy wave ?
We sink, we perish !—Father, hear and save !

Helmet and lance are dust !
Is not the strong man withered from our eye ?
The arm struck down that held our banners high ?—
Thine is our spirits' trust !
Look through the gathering shadows of the grave !
Do we not perish ?—Father, hear and save !

(HERNANDEZ *enters.*)

Elm. Why comest thou, man of vengeance ? What have I
To do with thee ? Am I not bowed enough ?—
Thou art no mourner's comforter !
Her. Thy lord
Hath sent me unto thee. Till this day's task
Be closed, thou daughter of the feeble heart !
He bids thee seek him not, but lay thy ways
Before Heaven's altar, and in penitence
Make thy soul's peace with God.
Elm. Till this day's task
Be closed !—there is strange triumph in thine eyes—
Is it that I have fallen from that high place
Whereon I stood in fame ?—But I can feel
A wild and bitter pride in thus being past
The power of thy dark glance ! My spirit now
Is wound about by one sole mighty grief ;
Thy scorn hath lost its sting. Thou mayest reproach—
Her. I come not to reproach thee. Heaven doth work
By many agencies ; and in its hour
There is no insect which the summer breeze
From the green leaf shakes trembling, but may serve
Its deep unsearchable purposes, as well

As the great ocean, or the eternal fires
Pent in earth's caves! Thou hast but speeded that,
Which, in the infatuate blindness of thy heart,
Thou wouldst have trampled o'er all holy ties
But to avert one day!
Elm. My senses fail—
Thou saidst—Speak yet again—I could not catch
The meaning of thy words.
Her. E'en now thy lord
Hath sent our foes defiance. On the walls
He stands in conference with the boastful Moor,
And awful strength is with him. Through the blood
Which this day must be poured in sacrifice
Shall Spain be free. On all her olive-hills
Shall men set up the battle-sign of fire,
And round its blaze, at midnight, keep the sense
Of vengeance wakeful in each other's hearts
E'en with thy children's tale!
Xim. Peace, father! peace!
Behold she sinks!—the storm hath done its work
Upon the broken reed. Oh! lend thine aid
To bear her hence. [*They lead her away.*

SCENE VI.—*A Street in Valencia. Several Groups of Citizens and Soldiers, many of them lying on the steps of a church. Arms scattered on the ground around them.*

An Old Cit. The air is sultry, as with thunder-clouds.
I left my desolate home, that I might breathe
More freely in Heaven's face, but my heart feels
With this hot gloom o'erburdened. I have now
No sons to tend me. Which of you, kind friends,
Will bring the old man water from the fount,
To moisten his parched lip? [*A citizen goes out.*
2d Cit. This wasting siege,
Good Father Lopez, hath gone hard with you!
'Tis sad to hear no voices through the house,
Once peopled with fair sons!
3d Cit. Why, better thus,
Than to be haunted with their famished cries,
E'en in your very dreams!
Old Cit. Heaven's will be done!
These are dark times! I have not been alone
In my affliction.
3d Cit. (*with bitterness*). Why, we have but this thought
Left for our gloomy comfort!—And 'tis well!
Ay, let the balance be awhile struck even
Between the noble's palace and the hut,
Where the worn peasant sickens!—They that bear
The humble dead unhonored to their homes,
Pass now i' the streets no lordly bridal train
With its exulting music; and the wretch
Who on the marble steps of some proud hall

Flings himself down to die, in his last need
And agony of famine, doth behold
No scornful guests, with their long purple robes,
To the banquet sweeping by. Why, this is just!
These are the days when pomp is made to feel
Its human mould!

4th Cit. Heard you last night the sound
Of Saint Iago's bell?—How sullenly
From the great tower it pealed!

5th Cit. Ay, and 'tis said
No mortal hand was near when so it seemed
To shake the midnight streets.

Old Cit. Too well I know
The sound of coming fate!—'Tis ever thus
When Death is on his way to make it night
In the Cid's ancient house.—Oh! there are things
In this strange world of which we've all to learn
When its dark bounds are passed. Yon bell, untouched
(Save by the hands we see not), still doth speak—
When of that line some stately head is marked—
With a wild hollow peal, at dead of night,
Rocking Valencia's towers. I've heard it oft,
Nor known its warning false.

4th Cit. And will our chief
Buy with the price of his fair children's blood
A few more days of pining wretchedness
For this forsaken city?

Old Cit. Doubt it not!—
But with that ransom he may purchase still
Deliverance for the land! And yet 'tis sad
To think that such a race, with all its fame,
Should pass away! For she, his daughter too,
Moves upon earth as some bright thing whose time
To sojourn there is short.

5th Cit. Then woe for us
When she is gone! Her voice—the very sound
Of her soft step was comfort, as she moved
Through the still house of mourning! Who like her
Shall give us hope again?

Old Cit. Be still!—she comes,
And with a mien how changed!—A hurrying step,
And a flushed cheek!—What may this bode?—Be still!

(XIMENA *enters, with Attendants carrying a banner*).

Xim. Men of Valencia! in an hour like this,
What do ye here?

A Cit. We die!

Xim. Brave men die *now*
Girt for the toil, as travelers suddenly
By the dark night o'ertaken on their way!
These days require such death! It is too much
Of luxury for our wild and angry times
To fold the mantle round us, and to sink
From life, as flowers that shut up silently,

When the sun's heat doth scorch them! Hear ye not?
A Cit. Lady! what wouldst thou with us?
Xim. Rise and arm!
E'en now the children of your chief are led
Forth by the Moor to perish!—Shall this be,
Shall the high sound of such a name be hushed
I' the land to which for ages it hath been
A battle-word, as 'twere some passing note
Of shepherd-music? Must this work be done,
And ye lie pining here, as men in whom
The pulse which God hath made for noble thought
Can so be thrilled no longer?
Cit. 'Tis e'en so!
Sickness, and toil, and grief, have breathed upon us,
Our hearts beat faint and low.
Xim. Are ye so poor
Of soul, my countrymen! that ye can draw
Strength from no deeper source than that which sends
The red blood mantling through the joyous veins,
And gives the fleet step wings?—Why, how have age
And sensitive womanhood ere now endured,
Through pangs of searching fire, in some proud cause,
Blessing that agony? Think ye the Power
Which bore them nobly up, as if to teach
The torturer where eternal Heaven had set
Bounds to his sway, was earthly, of this earth—
This dull mortality!—Nay, then look on me!
Death's touch hath marked me, and I stand amongst you,
As one whose place, i' the sunshine of your world,
Shall soon be left to fill! I say, the breath
Of the incense, floating through yon fane, shall scarce
Pass from your path before me! But even now,
I've that within me, kindling through the dust,
Which from all time hath made high deeds its voice
And token to the nations;—Look on me!
Why hath Heaven poured forth courage as a flame
Wasting the womanish heart, which must be stilled
Yet sooner for its swift consuming brightness,
If not to shame your doubt, and your despair,
And your soul's torpor?—Yet, arise and arm!
It may not be too late.
A Cit. Why, what are we,
To cope with hosts?—Thus faint, and worn, and few,
O'ernumbered and forsaken, is't for us
To stand against the mighty?
Xim. And for whom
Hath He, who shakes the mighty with a breath
From their high places, made the fearfulness,
And ever-wakeful presence of His power,
To the pale startled earth most manifest.
But for the weak?—Was't for the helmed and crowned
That suns were stayed at noonday? Stormy seas
As a rill parted?—Mailed archangels sent
To wither up the strength of kings with death?—

I tell you, if these marvels have been done,
'Twas for the wearied and the oppressed of men.
They needed such. And generous faith hath power,
By her prevailing spirit, e'en yet to work
Deliverances, whose tale shall live with those
Of the great elder time!—Be of good heart!
Who is forsaken? He that gives the thought
A place within his breast!—'Tis not for you.
Know ye this banner?
Cits. (*murmuring to each other*). Is she not inspired?
Doth not Heaven call us by her fervent voice?
Xim. Know ye this banner?
Cits. 'Tis the Cid's.
Xim. The Cid's!
Who breathes that name but in the exulting tone
Which the heart rings to? Why, the very wind,
As it swells out the noble standard's fold,
Hath a triumphant sound!—The Cid's! It moved
Even as a sign of victory through the land,
From the free skies, ne'er stooping to a foe!
Old Cit. Can ye still pause, my brethren? Oh! that youth
Through this worn frame were kindling once again!
Xim. Ye linger still? Upon this very air,
He that was born in happy hour for Spain,
Poured forth his conquering spirit! 'Twas the breeze
From your own mountains which came down to wave
This banner of his battles, as it drooped
Above the champion's deathbed. Nor even then
Its tale of glory closed. They made no moan
O'er the dead hero, and no dirge was sung,
But the deep tambour and shrill horn of war
Told when the mighty passed! They wrapt him not
With the pale shroud, but braced the warrior's form
In war array, and on his barbed steed,
As for a triumph, reared him; marching forth
In the hushed midnight from Valencia's walls,
Beleaguered then, as now. All silently
The stately funeral moved. But who was he
That followed, charging on the tall white horse,
And with the solemn standard, broad and pale,
Waving in sheets of snowlight? And the cross,
The bloody cross, far-blazing from his shield,
And the fierce meteor-sword? They fled, they fled,
The kings of Afric, with their countless hosts,
Were dust in his red path. The cimeter
Was shivered as a reed;—for in that hour
The warrior saint that keeps the watch for Spain,
Was armed betimes. And o'er that fiery field
The Cid's high banner streamed all joyously,
For still its lord was there.
Cits. (*rising tumultuously*). Even unto death
Again it shall be followed!
Xim. Will he see
The noble stem hewn down, the beacon-light

Which from his house for ages o'er the land
Hath shone through cloud and storm, thus quenched at once?
Will he not aid his children in the hour
Of this their utmost peril? Awful power
Is with the holy dead, and there are times
When the tomb hath no chain they cannot burst!
Is it a thing forgotten how he woke
From its deep rest of old; remembering Spain
In her great danger? At the night's mid-watch
How Leon started when the sound was heard
That shook her dark and hollow-echoing streets,
As with the heavy tramp of steel-clad men,
By thousands marching through. For he had risen!
The Campeador was on his march again,
And in his arms, and followed by his hosts
Of shadowy spearmen. He had left the world
From which we are dimly parted, and gone forth,
And called his buried warriors from their sleep,
Gathering them round him to deliver Spain;
For Afric was upon her. Morning broke,
Day rushed through clouds of battle; but at eve
Our God had triumphed, and the rescued land
Sent up a shout of victory from the field,
That rocked her ancient mountains.

The Cits. Arm! To arms!
On to our chief! We have strength within us yet
To die with our blood roused! Now be the word
For the Cid's house! [*They begin to arm themselves.*

Xim. Ye know his battle-song—
The old rude strain wherewith his bands went forth
To strike down Paynim swords? [*She sings.*

THE CID'S BATTLE SONG.

The Moor is on his way,
With the tambour peal and the tecbir-shout,
And the horn o'er the blue seas ringing out,
He hath marshalled his dark array!

Shout through the vine-clad land!
That her sons on all their hills may hear,
And sharpen the point of the red wolf-spear,
And the sword for the brave man's hand!

[*The* CITIZENS *join in the song, while they continue arming themselves.*

Banners are in the field!
The chief must rise from his joyous board,
And turn from the feast ere the wine be poured,
And take up his father's shield!

The Moor is on his way!
Let the peasant leave his olive-ground
And the goats roam wild through the pine-woods round!
There is nobler work to-day!

Send forth the trumpet's call!
Till the bridegroom cast the goblet down,
And the marriage-robe, and the flowery crown;
And arm in the banquet-hall!

And stay the funeral train:
Bid the chanted mass be hushed awhile,
And the bier laid down in the holy aisle,
And the mourners girt for Spain.

[*They take up the banner and follow* XIMENA *out. Their voices are heard gradually dying away at a distance.*

Ere night must swords be red!
It is not an hour for knells and tears,
But for helmets braced, and serried spears!
To-morrow for the dead!

The Cid is in array!
His steed is barded,[1] his plume waves high,
His banner is up in the sunny sky,
Now joy for the Cross to-day!

SCENE VII.—*The Walls of the City. The Plains beneath, with the Moorish Camp and Army.*

GONZALEZ—GARCIAS—HERNANDEZ.

(*A wild sound of Moorish Music heard from below.*)

Her. What notes are these in their deep mournfulness
So strangely wild?
Gar. 'Tis the shrill melody
Of the Moor's ancient death-song. Well I know
The rude barbaric sound; but, till this hour,
It seemed not fearful. Now, a shuddering chill
Comes o'er me with its tones. Lo! from yon tent
They lead the noble boys!
Her. The young, and pure,
And beautiful victims! 'Tis on things like these
We cast our hearts in wild idolatry,
Sowing the winds with hope! Yet this is well,
Thus brightly crowned with life's most gorgeous flowers
And all unblemished, earth should offer up
Her treasures unto Heaven!
Gar. (*to* GONZALEZ). My chief, the Moor
Hath led your children forth.
Gon. (*starting*). Are my sons there?
I knew they could not perish; for yon Heaven
Would ne'er behold it! Where is he that said
I was no more a father? They look changed—
Pallid and worn, as from a prison-house!

[1] *Barded*, caparisoned for battle.

Or is't mine eyes sees dimly? But their steps
Seem heavy, as with pain. I hear the clank—
Oh God! their limbs are fettered!
Abd. (*coming forward beneath the walls*). Christian! look
Once more upon thy children. There is yet
One moment for the trembling of the sword;
Their doom is still with thee.
Gon. Why should this man
So mock us with the semblance of our kind?—
Moor! Moor! thou dost too daringly provoke,
In thy bold cruelty, the all-judging One,
Who visits for such things! Hast thou no sense
Of thy frail nature? 'Twill be taught thee yet,
And darkly shall the anguish of my soul,
Darkly and heavily, pour itself on thine,
When thou shalt cry for mercy from the dust,
And be denied!
Abd. Nay, is it not thyself,
That hast no mercy and no love within thee?
These are thy sons, the nurslings of thy house;
Speak! must they live or die?
Gon. (*in violent emotion*). Is it Heaven's will
To try the dust it kindles for a day,
With infinite agony! How have I drawn
This chastening on my head! They bloomed around me.
And my heart grew too fearless in its joy,
Glorying in their bright promise! If we fall,
Is there no pardon for our feebleness?

[HERNANDEZ, *without speaking holds up a cross before him.*

Abd. Speak!
Gon. (*snatching the cross and lifting it up*). Let the earth
be shaken through its depths,
But *this* must triumph!
Abd. (*coldly*). Be it as thou wilt.
Unsheath the cimeter! [*To his guards.*
Gar. (*to* GONZALEZ). Away, my chief!
This is your place no longer. There are things
No human heart, though battle-proof as yours,
Unmaddened may sustain.
Gon. Be still! I have now
No place on earth but this!
Alph. (*from beneath*). Men! give me way,
That I may speak forth once before I die!
Gar. The princely boy!—how gallantly his brow
Wears its high nature in the face of death!
Alph. Father!
Gon. My son! my son! mine eldest-born!
Alph. Stay but upon the ramparts! Fear thou not!
There *is* good courage in me. Oh, my father,
I will not shame thee! only let me fall,
Knowing thine eye looks proudly on thy child,
So shall my heart have strength!

Gon. Would, would to God,
That I might die for thee, my noble boy,
Alphonso, my fair son!
Alph. Could I have lived,
I might have been a warrior! Now, farewell,
But look upon me still! I will not blench
When the keen sabre flashes! Mark me well!
Mine eyelids shall not quiver as it falls,
So thou wilt look upon me!
Gar. (*to* GONZALEZ). Nay, my lord!
We must begone! Thou *canst* not bear it!
Gon. Peace!
Who hath told *thee* how much man's heart can bear?—
Lend me thine arm—my brain whirls fearfully!
How thick the shades close round! My boy! my boy!
Where art thou in this gloom?
Gar. Let us go hence!
This is a dreadful moment!
Gon. Hush!—what saidst thou?
Now let me look on him!—Dost *thou* see aught
Through the dull mist which wraps us?
Gar. I behold—
O! for a thousand Spaniards! to rush down—
Gon. Thou seest—my heart stands still to hear thee speak!
There seems a fearful hush upon the air,
As 'twere the dead of night!
Gar. The hosts have closed
Around the spot in stillness. Through the spears,
Ranged thick and motionless, I see him not,
But now—
Gon. He bade me keep mine eye upon him,
And all is darkness round me!—Now?
Gar. A sword,
A sword, springs upward, like a lightning burst,
Through the dark serried mass!—Its cold blue glare
Is wavering to and fro—'tis vanished—hark!
Gon. I heard it, yes!—I heard the dull dead sound
That heavily broke the silence!—Didst thou speak?
I lost thy words—come nearer!
Gar. 'Twas—'tis past—
The sword fell *then!*
Her. (*with exultation*). Flow forth, thou noble blood!
Fount of Spain's ransom and deliverance, now
Unchecked and brightly forth! Thou kingly stream!
Blood of our heroes! blood of martyrdom!
Which through so many warrior-hearts hast poured
Thy fiery currents, and hast made our hills
Free, by thine own free offering! Bathe the land,
But there thou shalt not sink! Our very air
Shall take thy coloring, and our loaded skies
O'er the infidel hang dark and ominous,
With battle hues of thee! And thy deep voice
Rising above them to the judgment-seat
Shall call a burst of gathered vengeance down,

To sweep the oppressor from us ! For thy wave
Hath made his guilt run o'er !
Gon. (*endeavoring to rouse himself*). 'Tis all a dream !
There is not one—no hand on earth could harm
That fair boy's graceful head !—Why look you thus ?
Abd. (*pointing to* CARLOS). Christian ! e'en yet thou hast a son.
Gon. E'en yet !
Gar. My father ! take me from these fearful men !
Wilt thou not save me, father ?
Gon. (*attempting to unsheath his sword*). Is the strength
From mine arm shivered ?—Garcias, follow me !
Gar. Whither, my chief ?
Gon. Why, we can die as well
On yonder plain—ay, a spear's thrust will do
The little that our misery doth require,
Sooner than e'en this anguish ! Life is best
Thrown from us in such moments. [*Voices heard at a distance.*
Her. Hush ! what strain
Floats on the wind ?
Gar. 'Tis the Cid's battle-song.
What marvel hath been wrought ?
[*Voices approaching heard in song.*
The Moor is on his way !
With the tambour-peal and the tecbir-shout,
And the horn o'er the blue seas ringing out ;
He hath marshalled his dark array !

(XIMENA *enters, followed by the* CITIZENS, *with the Banner*).

Xim. Is it too late ? My father, these are men
Through life and death prepared to follow thee
Beneath this banner ! Is their zeal too late ?
Oh ! there's a fearful history on thy brow !
What hast thou seen ?
Gar. It is not *all* too late.
Xim. My brothers !
Her. All is well.
(*To* GARCIAS.) Hush ! wouldst thou chill
That which hath sprung within them, as a flame
From the altar-embers mounts in sudden brightness ?
I say, 'tis not too late, ye men of Spain !
On to the rescue !
Xim. Bless me, O my father !
And I will hence, to aid thee with my prayers,
Sending my spirit with thee through the storm
Lit up by flashing swords !
Gon. (*falling upon her neck*). Hath aught been spared ?
Am I not all bereft ? Thou'rt left me still !
Mine own, my loveliest one, thou'rt left me still !
Farewell !—thy father's blessing, and thy God's,
Be with thee, my Ximena !
Xim. Fare thee well !
If e'er thy steps turn homeward from the field
The voice is hushed that still hath welcomed thee
Think of me in thy victory !

Her. Peace! no more!
This is no time to melt our nature down
To a soft stream of tears!—Be of strong heart!
Give me the banner! Swell the song again!
The Cits. Ere night must swords be red!
It is not an hour for knells and tears,
But for helmets braced and serried spears!—
To-morrow for the dead!

[*Exeunt omnes.*

SCENE VIII.—*Before the Altar of a Church.*

ELMINA *rises from the steps of the Altar.*

Elm. The clouds are fearful that o'erhang thy ways,
Oh, thou mysterious Heaven!—It cannot be
That I have drawn the vials of thy wrath,
To burst upon me through the lifting up
Of a proud heart, elate in happiness!
No! in my day's full noon, for me life's flowers
But wreathed a cup of trembling; and the love,
The boundless love, my spirit was formed to bear,
Hath ever, in its place of silence, been
A trouble and a shadow, tinging thought
With hues too deep for joy!—I never looked
On my fair children, in their buoyant mirth
Or sunny sleep, when all the gentle air
Seemed glowing with their quiet blessedness,
But o'er my soul there came a shuddering sense
Of earth, and its pale changes; even like that
Which vaguely mingles with our glorious dreams—
A restless and disturbing consciousness
That the bright things must fade! How have I shrunk
From the dull murmur of the unquiet voice,
With its low tokens of mortality,
Till my heart fainted midst their smiles!—their smiles!
Where are those glad looks now?—Could they go down,
With all their joyous light, that seemed not earth's,
To the cold grave? My children! righteous Heaven!
There floats a dark remembrance o'er my brain
Of one who told me, with relentless eye,
That *this* should be the hour! [XIMENA *enters.*
Xim. They are gone forth
Unto the rescue!—strong in heart and hope,
Faithful, though few! My mother, let thy prayers
Call on the land's good saints to lift once more
The sword and cross that sweep the field for Spain
As in old battle; so thine arms e'en yet
May clasp thy sons!—For me, my part is done!
The flame which dimly might have lingered yet
A little while, hath gathered all its rays
Brightly to sink at once; and it is well!
The shadows are around me; to thy heart
Fold me, that I may die.

Elm. My child! What dream
Is on thy soul? Even now thine aspect wears
Life's brightest inspiration!
Xim. Death's!
Elm. Away!
Thine eye hath starry clearness; and thy cheek
Doth glow beneath it with a richer hue
Than tinged its earliest flower!
Xim. It well may be
There are far deeper and far warmer hues
Than those which draw their coloring from the founts
Of youth, or health, or hope.
Elm. Nay, speak not thus!
There's that about thee shining which would send
E'en through *my* heart a sunny glow of joy,
Were't not for these sad words. The dim cold air
And solemn light, which wrap these tombs and shrines
As a pale gleaming shroud, seem kindled up
With a young spirit of ethereal hope
Caught from thy mien! Oh no! this is not death!
Xim. Why should not He, whose touch dissolves our chain
Put on his robes of beauty when He comes
As a deliverer? He hath many forms,
They should not all be fearful! If His call
Be but our gathering to that distant land
For whose sweet waters we have pined with thirst
Why should not its prophetic sense be borne
Into the heart's deep stillness, with a breath
Of summer-winds, a voice of melody,
Solemn, yet lovely? Mother, I depart!—
Be it thy comfort, in the after-days,
That thou hast seen me thus!
Elm. Distract me not
With such wild fears! Can I bear on with life
When thou art gone? Thy voice, thy step, thy smile,
Passed from my path? Alas! even now thine eye
Is changed—thy cheek is fading!
Xim. Ay, the clouds
Of the dim hour are gathering o'er my sight,
And yet I fear not, for the God of Help
Comes in that quiet darkness! It may soothe
Thy woes, my mother! if I tell thee now
With what glad calmness I behold the veil
Falling between me and the world, wherein
My heart so ill hath rested.
Elm. Thine!
Xim. Rejoice
For her, that, when the garland of her life
Was blighted, and the springs of hope were dried,
Received her summons hence; and had no time,
Bearing the canker at the impatient heart,
To wither, sorrowing for that gift of Heaven,
Which lent one moment of existence light,
That dimmed the rest forever!

Elm. How is this?
My child, what mean'st thou?
Xim. Mother! I have loved,
And been beloved!—the sunbeam of an hour,
Which gave life's hidden treasures to mine eye,
As they lay shining in their secret founts,
Went out and left them colorless. 'Tis past—
And what remains on earth?—the rainbow mist,
Through which I gazed, hath melted, and my sight
Is cleared to look on all things as they are!—
But this is far too mournful! Life's dark gift
Hath fallen too early and too cold upon me!
Therefore I would go hence!
Elm. And thou hast loved
Unknown——
Xim. Oh! pardon, pardon that I veiled
My thoughts from thee! But thou hast woes enough,
And mine came o'er me when thy soul had need
Of more than mortal strength! For I had scarce
Given the deep consciousness that I was loved
A treasure's place within my secret heart,
When earth's brief joy went from me!—
'Twas at morn
I saw the warriors to the field go forth,
And he—my chosen—was there amongst the rest,
With his young, glorious brow! I looked again—
The strife grew dark beneath me—but his plume
Waved free above the lances. Yet again—
It had gone down! and steeds were trampling o'er
The spot to which mine eyes were riveted,
Till blinded by the intenseness of their gaze!
And then—at last—I hurried to the gate,
And met him there! I met him!—on his shield,
And with his cloven helm, and shivered sword,
And dark hair steeped in blood! They bore him past—
Mother! I saw his face!—Oh! such a death
Works fearful changes on the fair of earth,
The pride of woman's eye!
Elm. Sweet daughter, peace!
Wake not the dark remembrance; for thy frame——
Xim. There will be peace ere long. I shut my heart,
Even as a tomb, o'er that lone silent grief,
That I might spare it thee!—But now the hour
Is come when that which would have pierced thy soul
Shall be its healing balm. Oh! weep thou not,
Save with a gentle sorrow!
Elm. Must it be?
Art thou indeed to leave me?
Xim. (*exultingly*). Be thou glad!
I say, rejoice above thy favored child!
Joy, for the soldier when his field is fought,
Joy, for the peasant when his vintage-task
Is closed at eve! But most of all for her,
Who, when her life had changed its glittering robes

For the dull garb of sorrow, which doth cling
So heavily around the journeyers on,
Cast down its weight—and slept!
Elm. Alas! thine eye
Is wandering—yet how brightly! Is this death,
Or some high wondrous vision?—Speak, my child!
How is it with thee now?
Xim. (*wildly*). I see it still!
'Tis floating, like a glorious cloud on high,
My father's banner! Hear'st thou not a sound?
The trumpet of Castile?—Praise, praise to Heaven!
—Now may the weary rest! Be still!—Who calls
The night so fearful?—— [*She dies.*
Elm. No! she is not dead!—
Ximena!—speak to me! Oh yet a tone
From that sweet voice, that I may gather in
One more remembrance of its lovely sound,
Ere the deep silence fall! What, is all hushed?—
No, no! it cannot be!—How should we bear
The dark misgivings of our souls, if Heaven
Left not such beings with us?—But is this
Her wonted look?—too sad a quiet lies
On its dim fearful beauty! Speak, Ximena!
Speak!—my heart dies within me! She is gone,
With all her blessed smiles!—my child! my child!
Where art thou? Where is that which answered me,
From thy soft-shining eyes?—Hush! doth she move?
One light lock seemed to tremble on her brow,
As a pulse throbbed beneath;—'twas but the voice
Of my despair that stirred it! She is gone!
[*She throws herself on the body.*

(GONZALEZ *enters, alone, and wounded.*)

Elm. (*rising as he approaches*). I must not *now* be scorned.
No, not a look,
A whisper of reproach! Behold my woe!—
Thou canst not scorn me now!—
Gon. Hast thou heard *all?*
Elm. Thy daughter on my bosom laid her head,
And passed away to rest.—Behold her there,
Even such as death hath made her!
Gon. (*bending over* XIMENA'S *body*). Thou art gone
A little while before me, oh, my child!
Why should the traveller weep to part with those
That scarce an hour will reach their promised land
Ere he too cast his pilgrim staff away,
And spread his couch beside them?
Elm. Must it be
Henceforth enough that *once* a thing so fair
Had its bright place amongst us? Is this all
Left for the years to come? We will not stay!
Earth's chain each hour grows weaker.
Gon. (*still gazing upon* XIMENA). And thou'rt laid
To slumber in the shadow, blessed child!

Of a yet stainless altar, and beside
A sainted warrior's tomb!—Oh, fitting place
For thee to yield thy pure heroic soul
Back unto him that gave it! And thy cheek
Yet smiles in its bright paleness!
Elm. Hadst thou seen
The look with which she passed!
Gon. (*still bending over her*). Why, 'tis almost
Like joy to view thy beautiful repose!
The faded image of that perfect calm
Floats, e'en as long-forgotten music, back
Into my weary heart! No dark wild spot
On *thy* clear brow doth tell of bloody hands
That quenched young life by violence!—We've seen
Too much of horror, in one crowded hour,
To weep for aught so gently gathered hence!—
Oh! *man* leaves other traces!
Elm. (*suddenly starting*). It returns
On my bewildered soul!—Went ye not forth
Unto the rescue?—And thou'rt here alone!—
Where are my sons?
Gon. (*solemnly*). We were too late!
Elm. Too late!
Hast thou naught else to tell me?
Gon. I brought back
From that last field the banner of my sires,
And my own death-wound.
Elm. Thine!
Gon. Another hour
Shall hush its throbs forever. I go hence,
And with me——
Elm. No! Man *could* not lift his hands.
Where hast thou left thy sons?
Gon. I *have* no sons.
Elm. What hast thou said?
Gon. That now there lives not one
To wear the glory of mine ancient house,
When I am gone to rest.
Elm. (*throwing herself on the ground, and speaking in a low hurried voice*).
In one brief hour, all gone!—and *such* a death!
I see their blood gush forth!—their graceful heads—
Take the dark vision from me, oh, my God!
And such a death for *them!* I was not there!
They were but mine in beauty and in joy,
Not in that mortal anguish!—All, all gone!—
Why should I struggle more? What *is* this Power,
Against whose might, on all sides pressing us,
We strive with fierce impatience, which but lays
Our own frail spirits prostrate?
(*After a long pause.*)—Now I know
Thy hand, my God!—and they are soonest crushed
That most withstand it! I resist no more. [*She rises,*
A light, a light springs up from grief and death,

Which with its solemn radiance doth reveal
Why we have thus been tried!
Gon. Then I may still
Fix my last look on thee, in holy love,
Parting, but yet with hope?
Elm. (*falling at his feet*). Canst thou forgive?—
—Oh, I have driven the arrow to thy heart,
That should have buried it within mine own,
And borne the pang in silence! I have cast
Thy life's fair honor, in my wild despair,
As an unvalued gem upon the waves,
Whence thou hast snatched it back, to bear from earth,
All stainless, on thy breast. Well hast thou done—
But I—canst thou forgive?
Gon. Within this hour
I've stood upon that verge whence mortals fall,
And learned how 'tis with one whose sight grows dim.
And whose foot trembles on the gulf's dark side.—
Death purifies all feeling—We will part
In pity and in love.
Elm. Death!—And thou too
Art on thy way! Oh, joy for thee, high heart.
Glory and joy for thee! The day is closed,
And well and nobly hast thou borne thyself
Through its long battle-toils, though many swords
Have entered thine own soul! But on my head
The lonely one of earth!—Ay, this is just.
Recoil the fierce invokings of despair,
And I'm left far distanced in the race,
I am not worthy that upon my breast
In this, thine hour of victory, thou shouldst yield
Thy spirit unto God!
Gon. Thou art! thou art!
Oh! a life's love, a heart's long faithfulness,
Even in the presence of eternal things,
Wearing their chastened beauty all undimmed,
Assert their lofty claims; and these are not
For one dark hour to cancel!—we are here,
Before that altar which received the vows
Of our unbroken youth, and meet it is
For such a witness, in the sight of Heaven,
And in the face of death, whose shadowy arm
Comes dim between us, to record the exchange
Of our tried hearts' forgiveness.—Who are they,
That in one path have journeyed, needing not
Forgiveness at its close?

(A CITIZEN *enters hastily.*)

Cit. The Moors! the Moors!
Gon. How! is the city stormed?
O righteous Heaven! for this I looked not yet!
Hath all been done in vain? Why, then, 'tis time
For prayer, and then to rest!
Cit. The sun shall set,

And not a Christian voice be left for prayer,
To-night, within Valencia. Round our walls
The paynim host is gethering for the assault,
And we have none to guard them.
Gon. Then my place
Is here no longer. I had hoped to die
E'en by the altar and the sepulchre
Of my brave sires; but this was not to be!
Give me my sword again, and lead me hence
Back to the ramparts. I have yet an hour,
And it hath still high duties. Now, my wife!
Thou mother of my children—of the dead—
Whom I name unto thee in steadfast hope—
Farewell!
Elm. No, *not* farewell! My soul hath risen
To mate itself with thine; and by thy side
Amidst the hurling lances, I will stand,
As one on whom a brave man's love hath been
Wasted not utterly.
Gon. I thank thee, Heaven!
That I have tasted of the awful joy
Which Thou hast given, to temper hours like this
With a deep sense of Thee, and of Thine ends
In these dread visitings!
(*To* ELMINA). We will not part,
But with the spirit's parting.
Elm. One farewell
To her, that, mantled with sad loveliness,
Doth slumber at our feet! My blessed child!
Oh! in thy heart's affliction thou wert strong,
And holy courage did pervade thy woe
As light the troubled waters. Be at peace!
Thou whose bright spirit made itself the soul
Of all that were around thee! And thy life
E'en then was struck and withering at the core!
Farewell! thy parting look hath on me fallen,
E'en as a gleam of heaven, and I am now
More like what thou hast been. My soul is hushed,
For a still sense of purer worlds hath sunk
And settled on its depths with that last smile
Which from thine eye shone forth. Thou hast not lived
In vain—my child, farewell!
Gon. Surely for thee
Death had no sting, Ximena! We are blest,
To learn one secret of the shadowy pass,
From such an aspect's calmness. Yet once more
I kiss thy pale young cheek, my broken flower!
In token of the undying love and hope
Whose land is far away. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IX.—*The Walls of the City.*

HERNANDEZ.—*A few Citizens gathered round him.*

Her. Why, men have cast the treasures, which their lives
Had been worn down in gathering, on the pyre,
Ay, at their household hearths have lit the brand,
Even from that shrine of quiet love to bear
The flame which gave their temples and their homes,
In ashes, to the winds! They have done this,
Making a blasted void where once the sun
Looked upon lovely dwellings; and from earth
Razing all record that on such a spot
Childhood hath sprung, age faded, misery wept,
And frail humanity knelt before her God;
They have done *this*, in their free nobleness,
Rather than see the spoiler's tread pollute
Their holy places. Praise, high praise be theirs,
Who have left man such lessons! And these things,
Made your own hills their witnesses! The sky,
Whose arch bends o'er you, and the seas, wherein
Your rivers pour their gold, rejoicing saw
The altar, and the birthplace, and the tomb,
And all memorials of man's heart and faith,
Thus proudly honored! Be ye not outdone
By the departed! Though the godless foe
Be close upon us, we have power to snatch
The spoils of victory from him. Be but strong,
A few bright torches and brief moments yet
Shall baffle his flushed hope, and we may die,
Laughing him unto scorn. Rise, follow me,
And thou, Valencia! triumph in thy fate,
The ruin, not the yoke, and make thy towers
A beacon unto Spain!

Cits. We'll follow thee!
Alas! for our fair city, and the homes
Wherein we reared our children! But away!
The Moor shall plant no crescent o'er our fanes!

Voice (from a Tower on the Walls). Succors! Castile! Castile!

Cits. (rushing to the spot). It is even so!
Now blessing be to Heaven, for we are saved!—
Castile! Castile!

Voice (from the Tower). Line after line of spears,
Lance after lance, upon the horizon's verge,
Like festal lights from cities bursting up,
Doth skirt the plain. In faith, a noble host!

Another Voice. The Moor hath turned him from our walls, to front
The advancing might of Spain!

Cits. (shouting). Castile! Castile!

(GONZALEZ *enters, supported by* ELMINA *and a Citizen.*)

Gon. What shouts of joy are these?

Her. Hail! chieftain, hail!
Thus, even in death, 'tis given thee to receive
The conqueror's crown! Behold our God hath heard.
And armed Himself with vengeance! Lo! they come!
The lances of Castile!
Gon. I knew, I knew
Thou wouldst not utterly, my God, forsake
Thy servant in his need! My blood and tears
Have not sunk vainly to the attesting earth!
Praise to thee, thanks and praise, that I have lived
To see this hour!
Elm. And I, too, bless thy name,
Though thou hast proved me unto agony!
O God!—thou God of chastening!
Voice (from the Tower). They move on!
I see the royal banner in the air,
With its emblazoned towers!
Gon. Go, bring ye forth
The banner of the Cid, and plant it here,
To stream above me, for an answering sign
That the good cross doth hold its lofty place
Within Valencia still! What see ye now?
Her. I see a kingdom's might upon its path,
Moving in terrible magnificence,
Unto revenge and victory! With the flash
Of knightly swords, up-springing from the ranks,
As meteors from a still and gloomy deep,
And with the waving of ten thousand plumes,
Like a land's harvest in the autumn-wind,
And with fierce light, which is not of the sun.
But flung from sheets of steel—it comes, it comes,
The vengeance of our God!
Gon. I hear it now,
The heavy tread of mail-clad multitudes,
Like thunder-showers upon the forest paths.
Her. Ay, earth knows well the omen of that sound,
And she hath echoes, like a sepulchre's,
Pent in her secret hollows, to respond
Unto the step of death!
Gon. Hark! how the wind
Swells proudly with the battle-march of Spain!
Now the heart feels its power!—A little while
Grant me to live, my God!—What pause is this?
Her. A deep and dreadful one!—the serried files
Level their spears for combat; now the hosts
Look on each other in their brooding wrath,
Silent and face to face.

Voices heard without, chanting.

Calm on the bosom of thy God,
Fair spirit! rest thee now!
E'en while with ours thy footsteps trod
His seal was on thy brow.

Dust, to its narrow house beneath!
Soul, to its place on high!
They that have seen thy look in death,
No more may fear to die.

Elm. (*to* GONZALEZ). It is the death-hymn o'er thy daughter's bier!
But I am calm; and e'en like gentle winds,
That music, through the stillness of my heart,
Sends mournful peace.
Gon. Oh! well those solemn tones
Accord with such an hour, for all her life
Breathed of a hero's soul!
[*A sound of trumpets and shouting from the plain.*
Her. Now, now they close! Hark! what a dull dead sound
Is in the Moorish war-shout! I have known
Such tones prophetic oft. The shock is given—
Lo! they have placed their shields before their hearts,
And lowered their lances with their streamers on.
And on their steeds bent forward!—God for Spain!
The first bright sparks of battle have been struck
From spear to spear, across the gleaming field!—
There is no sight on which the blue sky looks
To match with this! 'Tis not the gallant crests
Nor banners with their glorious blazonry;
The very nature and high soul of man
Doth now reveal itself!
Gon. Oh, raise me up,
That I may look upon the noble scene!—
It will not be! That this dull mist would pass
A moment from my sight!—Whence rose that shout,
As in fierce triumph?
Her. (*clasping his hands*). Must I look on this?
The banner sinks—'tis taken!
Gon. Whose?
Her. Castile's!
Gon. Oh, God of battles!
Elm. Calm thy noble heart!
Thou wilt not pass away without thy need.
Nay, rest thee on my bosom.
Her. Cheer thee yet!
Our knights have spurred to rescue. There is now
A whirl, a mingling of all terrible things,
Yet more appalling than the fierce distinctness
Wherewith they moved before! I see tall plumes
All wildly tossing o'er the battle's tide,
Swayed by the wrathful motion, and the press
Of desperate men, as cedar-boughs by storms.
Many a white streamer there is dyed with blood,
Many a false corslet broken, many a shield
Pierced through! Now, shout for Santiago, shout!
Lo! javelins with a moment's brightness cleave
The thickening dust, and barbed steeds go down
With their helmed riders!—Who but One, can tell

How spirits part amidst that fearful rush
And trampling on of furious multitudes?
Gon. Thou'rt silent!—Seest thou more?—My soul grows dark.
Her. And dark and troubled as an angry sea,
Dashing some gallant armament in scorn
Against its rocks, is all on which I gaze!
I can but tell thee how tall spears are crossed,
And lances seem to shiver, and proud helms
To lighten with the stroke! But round the spot,
Where, like a storm-felled mast, our standard sank,
The heart of battle burns.
Gon. Where is that spot?
Her. It is beneath the lonely tuft of palms,
That lift their green heads o'er the tumult still,
In calm and stately grace.
Gon. *There* didst thou say?
Then God is with us, and we *must* prevail!
For on that spot they died!—My children's blood
Calls on the avenger thence!
Elm. They perished there!
And the bright locks that waved so joyously
To the free winds, lay trampled and defiled
Even on that place of death!—Oh, Merciful!
Hush the dark thought within me!
Her. (*with sudden exultation*). Who is he,
On the white steed, and with the castled helm,
And the gold-broidered mantle, which doth float
E'en like a sunny cloud above the fight;
And the pale cross, which from his breastplate gleams
With star-like radiance?
Gon. (*eagerly*). Didst thou say the cross?
Her. On his mailed bosom shines a broad white cross,
And his long plumage through the darkening air
Streams like a snow-wreath.
Gon. That should be—
Her. The king!—
Was it not told us how he sent, of late,
To the Cid's tomb, e'en for the silver cross,
Which he who slumbers there was wont to bind
O'er his brave heart in fight?
Gon. (*springing up joyfully*). My king! my king!
Now all good saints for Spain! -My noble king!
And thou art there! That I might look once more
Upon thy face!—But yet I thank thee, Heaven,
That thou hast sent him, from my dying hands
Thus to receive his city! [*He sinks back into* ELMINA'S *arms.*
Her. He hath cleared
A pathway 'midst the combat, and the light
Follows his charge through yon close living mass,
E'en as a gleam on some proud vessel's wake
Along the stormy waters!—'Tis redeemed—
The castled banner! It is flung once more,
In joy and glory, to the sweeping winds!—
There seems a wavering through the paynim hosts—
Castile doth press them sore—Now, now rejoice!

Gon. What hast thou seen?
Her. Abdullah falls! He falls!
The man of blood!—the spoiler!—he hath sunk
In our king's path! Well hath that royal sword
Avenged thy cause, Gonzalez!
They give way,
The Crescent's van is broken!—On the hills
And the dark pine-woods may the infidel
Call vainly, in his agony of fear,
To cover him from vengeance!—Lo! they fly!
They of the forest and the wilderness
Are scattered, e'en as leaves upon the wind!
Woe to the sons of Afric! Let the plains,
And the vine-mountains, and Hesperian seas,
Take their dead unto them!—that blood shall wash
Our soil from stains of bondage.
Gon. (*attempting to raise himself*). Set me free!
Come with me forth, for I must greet my king,
After his battle-field!
Her. O, blest in death!
Chosen of Heaven, farewell!—Look on the cross,
And part from earth in peace!
Gon. Now, charge once more.
God is with Spain, and Santiago's sword
Is reddening all the air!—Shout forth "Castile!"
The day is ours!—I go; but fear ye not!
For Afric's lance is broken, and my sons
Have won their first good field! [*He dies.*
Elm. Look on me yet!
Speak one farewell, my husband!—must thy voice
Enter my soul no more! Thine eye is fixed—
Now is my life uprooted.—And 'tis well.

(*A sound of triumphant music is heard, and many Castilian Knights and Soldiers enter*).

A Cit. Hush your triumphal sounds, although ye come
E'en as deliverers!—But the noble dead,
And those that mourn them, claim from human hearts
Deep silent reverence.
Elm. (*rising proudly*). No, swell forth, Castile!
Thy trumpet-music, till the seas and heavens,
And the deep hills, give every stormy note
Echoes to ring through Spain!—How, know ye not
That all arrayed for triumph, crowned and robed,
With the strong spirit which hath saved the land,
E'en now a conqueror to his rest is gone?—
Fear not to break that sleep, but let the wind
Swell on with victory's shout! *He* will not hear—
Hath earth a sound more sad?
Her. Lift ye the dead,
And bear him with the banner of his race
Waving above him proudly, as it waved
O'er the Cid's battles, to the tomb wherein
His warrior-sires are gathered. [*They raise the body.*

Elm. Ay, 'tis thus
Thou shouldst be honored !—And I follow thee
With an unfaltering and a lofty step,
To that last home of glory. She that wears
In her deep heart the memory of thy love,
Shall thence draw strength for all things, till the God
Whose hand around her hath unpeopled earth,
Looking upon her still and chastened soul,
Call it once more to thine !
(*To the Castilians*). Awake, I say,
Tambour and trumpet, wake ! And let the land
Through all her mountains hear your funeral peal—
So should a hero pass to his repose ! [*Exeunt omnes.*

THE VESPERS OF PALERMO.

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COUNT DI PROCIDA.
RAIMOND DI PROCIDA, *his Son.*
ERIBERT, *Viceroy.*
DE COUCI.
MONTALBA.
GUIDO.
ALBERTI.
ANSELMO, *a Monk.*

VITTORIA.
CONSTANCE, *Sister to Eribert.*

Nobles, Soldiers, Messengers, Vassals, Peasants, &c., &c.

SCENE—*Palermo.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Valley, with Vineyards and Cottages.*

Groups of Peasants—PROCIDA *disguised as a Pilgrim, among them.*

1*st Pea.* Ay, this was wont to be a festal time
In days gone by ! I can remember well
The old familiar melodies that rose
At break of morn, from all our purple hills,
To welcome in the vintage. Never since
Hath music seemed so sweet. But the light hearts
Which to those measures beat so joyously,
Are tamed to stillness now. There is no voice
Of joy through all the land.

2d Pea. Yes! there are sounds
Of revelry within the palaces,
And the fair castles of our ancient lords,
Where now the stranger banquets. Ye may hear
From *thence* the peals of song and laughter rise
At midnight's deepest hour.
3d Pea. Alas! we sat,
In happier days, so peacefully beneath
The olives and the vines our fathers reared,
Encircled by our children, whose quick steps
Flew by us in the dance! The time hath been
When peace was in the hamlet, wheresoe'er
The storm might gather. But this yoke of France
Falls on the peasant's neck as heavily
As on the crested chieftain's. We are bowed
E'en to the earth.
Pea's. Child. My father, tell me when
Shall the gay dance and song again resound
Amidst our chestnut-woods, as in those days
Of which thou'rt wont to tell the joyous tale?
1st Pea. When there are light and reckless hearts once more
In Sicily's green vales. Alas! my boy,
Men meet not now to quaff the flowing bowl,
To hear the mirthful song, and cast aside
The weight of work-day care: they meet to speak
Of wrongs and sorrows, and to whisper thoughts
They dare not breathe aloud.
Pro. (*from the background*). Ay, it is well
So to relieve the o'erburthened heart, which pants
Beneath its weight of wrongs; but better far
In silence to avenge them!
An Old Pea. What deep voice
Came with that startling tone!
1st Pea. It was our guest's,
The stranger pilgrim who hath sojourned here
Since yester-morn. Good neighbors mark him well:
He hath a stately bearing, and an eye
Whose glance looks through the heart. His mien accords
Ill with such vestments. How he folds around him
His pilgrim-cloak, e'en as it were a robe
Of knightly ermine! That commanding step
Should have been used in courts and camps to move.
Mark him!
Old Pea. Nay, rather, mark him not; the times
Are fearful, and they teach the boldest hearts
A cautious lesson. What should bring him here?
A Youth. He spoke of vengeance!
Old Pea. Peace! we are beset
By snares on every side, and we must learn
In silence and in patience to endure.
Talk not of vengeance, for the word is death.
Pro. (*coming forward indignantly*). The word is death!
And what hath life for *thee*,
That thou shouldst cling to it thus? thou abject thing!

QUEEN OF HEAVEN LIBRARY DENVER, COLO.

Whose very soul is moulded to the yoke,
And stamped with servitude. What! is it life
Thus at a breeze to start, to school thy voice
Into low fearful whispers, and to cast
Pale jealous looks around thee, lest, e'en then,
Strangers should catch its echo?—Is there aught
In *this* so precious, that thy furrowed cheek
Is blanched with terror at the passing thought
Of hazarding some few and evil days,
Which drag thus poorly on?

Some of the Peas. Away, away!
Leave us, for there is danger in thy presence.

Pro. Why, what is danger? Are there deeper ills
Than those ye bear thus calmly? Ye have drained
The cup of bitterness till naught remains
To fear or shrink from—therefore, be ye strong!
Power dwelleth with despair. Why start ye thus
At words which are but echoes of the thoughts
Locked in your secret souls? Full well I know,
There is not one among you, but hath nursed
Some proud indignant feeling, which doth make
One conflict of his life. I know *thy* wrongs,
And thine—and thine; but if within your breast
There is no chord that vibrates to *my* voice,
Then fare ye well.

A Youth (coming forward). No, no! say on, say on!
There are still free and fiery hearts e'en here,
That kindle at thy words.

Pea. If that indeed
Thou hast a hope to give us——

Pro. There is hope
For all who suffer with indignant thoughts
Which work in silent strength. What! think ye Heaven
O'erlooks the oppressor, if he bear awhile
His crested head on high? I tell you, no!
The avenger will not sleep. It was an hour
Of triumph to the conqueror, when our king,
Our young brave Conradin, in life's fair morn
On the red scaffold died. Yet not the less
Is Justice throned above; and her good time
Comes rushing on in storms: that royal blood
Hath lifted an accusing voice from earth,
And hath been heard. The traces of the past
Fade in *man's* heart, but ne'er doth Heaven forget.

Pea. Had we but arms and leaders, we are men
Who might earn vengeance yet; but wanting these,
What wouldst thou have us do?

Pro. Be vigilant;
And when the signal wakes the land, arise!
The peasant's arm is strong, and there shall be
A rich and noble harvest. Fare ye well. [*Exit* PROCIDA.

1*st Pea.* This man should be a prophet: how he seemed
To read our hearts with his dark searching glance
And aspect of command! and yet his garb
Is mean as ours.

2d Pea. Speak low; I know him well.
At first his voice disturbed me, like a dream
Of other days, but I remember now
His form seen oft, when in my youth I served
Beneath the banners of our kings! 'Tis he
Who hath been exiled and proscribed so long,
The Count di Procida.
Pea. And is this he?
Then Heaven protect him! for around his steps
Will many snares be set.
1st Pea. He comes not thus
But with some mighty purpose—doubt it not;
Perchance to bring us freedom. He is one,
Whose faith, through many a trial, hath been proved
True to our native princes. But away!
The noontide heat is past, and from the seas
Light gales are wandering through the vineyards; now
We may resume our toil. [*Exeunt Peasants.*

SCENE II.—*The Terrace of the Castle.*

ERIBERT, VITTORIA.

Vit. Have I not told thee that I bear a heart
Blighted and cold?—The affections of my youth
Lie slumbering in the grave; their fount is closed,
And all the soft and playful tenderness
Which hath its home in woman's breast, ere yet
Deep wrongs have seared it—all is fled from mine.
Urge me no more.
Eri. O lady! doth the flower
That sleeps entombed through the long wintry storms,
Unfold its beauty to the breath of spring,
And shall not woman's heart, from chill despair,
Wake at love's voice?
Vit. Love!—make *love's* name thy spell
And I am strong!—the very word calls up
From the dark past, thoughts, feelings, powers, arrayed
In arms against thee! Knowest thou *whom* I loved
While my soul's dwelling-place was still on earth?
One who was born for empire, and endowed
With such high gifts of princely majesty,
As bowed all hearts before him! Was he not
Brave, royal, beautiful? And such he died;
He died!—hast thou forgotten?—And thou'rt here,
Thou meetst my glance with eyes which coldly looked
—Coldly!—nay, rather with triumphant gaze,
Upon his murder!—Desolate as I am,
Yet in the mien of *thine* affianced bride,
Oh! my lost Conradin! there should be still
Somewhat of loftiness, which might o'erawe
The hearts of thine assassins.
Eri. Haughty dame!
If thy proud heart to tenderness be closed,

Know, danger is around thee: thou hast foes
That seek thy ruin, and my power alone
Can shield thee from their arts.
Vit. Provençal, tell
Thy tale of danger to some happy heart
Which hath its little world of loved ones round,
For whom to tremble; and its tranquil joys
That make earth Paradise. I stand alone;
—They that are blest may fear.
Eri. Is there not one
Who ne'er commands in vain? Proud lady, bend
Thy spirit to thy fate; for know that he,
Whose car of triumph in its earthquake path,
O'er the bowed neck of prostrate Sicily,
Hath borne him to dominion; he, my king,
Charles of Anjou, decrees thy hand the boon
My deeds have well deserved; and who hath power
Against his mandates?
Vit. Viceroy, tell thy lord
That, e'en where chains lie heaviest on the land,
Souls may not all be fettered. Oft, ere now,
Conquerors have rocked the earth, yet failed to tame
Unto their purposes that restless fire
Inhabiting man's breast. A spark busrts forth,
And so they perish! 'Tis the fate of those
Who sport with lightning—and it may be his.
Tell him I fear him not, and thus am free.
Eri. 'Tis well. Then nerve that lofty heart to bear
The wrath which is not powerless. Yet again
Bethink thee, lady! Love may change—*hath* changed
To vigilant hatred oft, whose sleepless eye
Still finds what most it seeks for. Fare thee well.
—Look to it yet!—to-morrow I return.

[*Exit* ERIBERT.

Vit. To-morrow!—Some ere now have slept and dreamt
Of morrows which ne'er dawned—or ne'er for them;
So silently their deep and still repose
Hath melted into death! Are there not balms
In nature's boundless realm, to pour out sleep
Like this on me? Yet should my spirit still
Endure its earthly bonds, till it could bear
To *his* a glorious tale of his own isle,
Free and avenged.—*Thou* shouldst be now at work,
In wrath, my native Etna! who dost lift
Thy spiry pillar of dark smoke so high,
Through the red heaven of sunset!—sleepst thou still,
With all thy founts of fire, while spoilers tread
The glowing vales beneath?

[PROCIDA *enters, disguised.*

Ha! who art thou,
Unbidden guest, that with so mute a step
Dost steal upon me?
Pro. One, o'er whom hath passed
All that can change man's aspect! Yet not long

Shalt thou find safety in forgetfulness.
I am he, to breathe whose name is perilous,
Unless thy wealth could bribe the winds to silence.
—Knowest thou *this*, lady? [*He shows a ring.*
Vit. Righteous heaven! the pledge
Amidst his people from the scaffold thrown
By him who perished, and whose kingly blood
E'en yet is unatoned. My heart beats high—
—Oh, welcome, welcome! thou art Procida,
The Avenger, the Deliverer!
Pro. Call me so,
When my great task is done. Yet who can tell
If the returned *be* welcome? Many a heart
Is changed since last we met.
Vit. Why dost thou gaze,
With such a still and solemn earnestness,
Upon my altered mien?
Pro. That I may read
If to the widowed love of Conradin,
Or the proud Eribert's triumphant bride,
I now intrust my fate.
Vit. Thou, Procida!
That *thou* shouldst wrong me thus!—prolong thy gaze
Till it hath found an answer.
Pro. 'Tis enough.
I find it in thy cheek, whose rapid change
Is from death's hue to fever's; in the wild
Unsettled brightness of thy proud dark eye,
And in thy wasted form. Ay, 'tis a deep
And solemn joy, thus in thy looks to trace,
Instead of youth's gay bloom, the characters
Of noble suffering: on thy brow the same
Commanding spirit holds its native state,
Which could not stoop to vileness. Yet the voice
Of Fame hath told afar, that thou shouldst wed
This tyrant Eribert.
Vit. And told it not
A tale of insolent love repelled with scorn,
Of stern commands and fearful menaces
Met with indignant courage? Procida!
It was but now that haughtily I braved
His sovereign's mandate, which decrees my hand,
With its fair appanage of wide domains,
And wealthy vassals, a most fitting boon,
To recompense his crimes.—I smiled—ay, smiled—
In proud security; for the high of heart
Have still a pathway to escape disgrace,
Though it be dark and lone.
Pro. Thou shalt not need
To tread its shadowy mazes. Trust my words:
I tell thee that a spirit is abroad
Which will not slumber, till its path be traced
By deeds of fearful fame. Vittoria, live!
It is most meet that thou *shouldst* live, to see

The mighty expiation ; for thy heart—
(Forgive me that I wronged its faith !) hath nursed
A high, majestic grief, whose seal is set
Deep on thy marble brow.
Vit. Then thou *canst* tell,
By gazing on the withered rose, that there
Time, or the blight, hath worked ! Ay, this is in
Thy vision's scope : but oh ! the things unseen,
Untold, undreamt of, which like shadows pass
Hourly o'er that mysterious world, a mind
To ruin struck by grief ! Yet doth my soul,
Far midst its darkness, nurse one soaring hope,
Wherein is bright vitality. 'Tis to see
His blood avenged, and his fair heritage,
My beautiful native land, in glory risen,
Like a warrior from his slumbers !
Pro. Hearest thou not
With what a deep and ominous moan the voice
Of our great mountain swells ? There will be soon
A fearful burst ! Vittoria ! brood no more
In silence o'er thy sorrows, but go forth
Amidst thy vassals (yet be secret still).
And let thy breath give nurture to the spark
Thou'lt find already kindled. I move on
In shadow, yet awakening in my path
That which shall startle nations. Fare thee well.
Vit. When shall we meet again ?—Are we not those
Whom most he loved on earth, and thinkest thou not
That love e'en yet shall bring his spirit near
While thus we hold communion ?
Pro. Yes, I feel
Its breathing influence whilst I look on thee,
Who wert its light in life. Yet will we not
Make womanish tears our offering on his tomb ;
He shall have nobler tribute !—I must hence,
But thou shalt soon hear more. Await the time.

[*Exeunt separately.*

SCENE III.—*The Sea-Shore.*

RAIMOND DI PROCIDA, CONSTANCE.

Con. There is a shadow far within your eye,
Which hath of late been deepening. You were wont,
Upon the clearness of your open brow,
To wear a brighter spirit, shedding round
Joy like our southern sun. It is not well,
If some dark thought be gathering o'er your soul,
To hide it from affection. Why is this ?
My Raimond, why is this ?
Raim. Oh ! from the dreams
Of youth, sweet Constance, hath not manhood still
A wild and stormy wakening ? They depart—
Light after light, our glorious visions fade,

The vaguely beautiful! till earth, unveiled,
Lies pale around; and life's realities
Press on the soul, from its unfathomed depth
Rousing the fiery feelings, and proud thoughts,
In all their fearful strength! 'Tis ever thus,
And doubly so with me; for I awoke
With high aspirings, making it a curse
To breathe where noble minds are bowed, as here.
—To breathe!—It is not breath!

Con. I know thy grief,
—And is't not mine?—for those devoted men
Doomed with their life to expiate some wild word,
Born of the social hour. Oh! I have knelt,
E'en at my brother's feet, with fruitless tears,
Imploring him to spare. His heart is shut
Against my voice; yet will I not forsake
The cause of mercy.

Raim. Waste not thou thy prayers,
Oh, gentle love, for them. There's little need
For pity, though the galling chain be worn
By some few slaves the less. Let them depart!
There is a world beyond the oppressor's reach,
And thither lies their way.

Con. Alas! I see
That some new wrong hath pierced you to the soul.

Raim. Pardon, belovèd Constance, if my words,
From feelings hourly stung, have caught, perchance,
A tone of bitterness. Oh! when thine eyes,
With their sweet eloquent thoughtfulness, are fixed
Thus tenderly on mine, I should forget
All else in their soft beams; and yet I came
To tell thee——

Con. What? What wouldst thou say? Oh speak!
Thou wouldst not leave me!

Raim. I have cast a cloud,
The shadow of dark thoughts and ruined fortunes,
O'er thy bright spirit. Haply, were I gone,
Thou wouldst resume thyself, and dwell once more,
In the clear sunny light of youth and joy,
E'en as before we met—before we loved!

Con. This is but mockery. Well thou knowest thy love
Hath given me nobler being; made my heart
A home for all the deep sublimities
Of strong affection; and I would not change
The exalted life I draw from that pure source,
With all its checkered hues of hope and fear,
E'en for the brightest calm. Thou most unkind!
Have I deserved this?

Raim. Oh! thou hast deserved
A love less fatal to thy peace than mine.
Think not 'tis mockery! But I cannot rest
To be the scorned and trampled thing I am
In this degraded land. Its very skies,
That smile as if but festivals were held

Beneath their cloudless azure, weigh me down
With a dull sense of bondage, and I pine
For freedom's chartered air. I would go forth
To seek my noble father: he hath been
Too long a lonely exile, and his name
Seems fading in the dim obscurity
Which gathers round my fortunes.
Con. Must we part?
And is it come to this? Oh! I have still
Deemed it enough of joy with *thee* to share
E'en grief itself. And now! But this is vain.
Alas! too deep, too fond, is woman's love:
Too full of hope, she casts on troubled waves
The treasures of her soul!
Raim. Oh! speak not thus!
Thy gentle and desponding tones fall cold
Upon my inmost heart. I leave thee but
To be more worthy of a love like thine;
For I have dreamt of fame! A few short years,
And we may yet be blest.
Con. A few short years!
Less time may well suffice for death and fate
To work all change on earth; to break the ties
Which early love had formed; and to bow down
The elastic spirit, and to blight each flower
Strewn in life's crowded path! But be it so!
Be it enough to know that happiness
Meets thee on other shores.
Raim. Where'er I roam,
Thou shalt be with my soul! Thy soft low voice
Shall rise upon remembrance, like a strain
Of music heard in boyhood, bringing back
Life's morning freshness. Oh! that there should be
Things which we love with such deep tenderness,
But, through that love, to learn how much of woe
Dwells in one hour like this! Yet weep thou not!
We shall meet soon; and many days, dear love!
Ere I depart.
Con. Then there's a respite still.
Days!—not a day but in its course may bring
Some strange vicissitude to turn aside
The impending blow we shrink from.—Fare thee well.
(*Returning.*)
—Oh, Raimond! this is not our *last* farewell!
Thou wouldst not so deceive me?
Raim. Doubt me not,
Gentlest and best-beloved! we meet again.
[*Exit* CONSTANCE.

Raim. (*after a pause*). When shall I breathe in freedom, and give scope
To those untameable and burning thoughts,
And restless aspirations, which consume
My heart i' the land of bondage? Oh! with you,
Ye everlasting images of power,

And of infinity! thou blue-rolling deep,
And you, ye stars! whose beams are characters
Wherewith the oracles of fate are traced—
With you my soul finds room, and casts aside
The weight that doth oppress her. But my thoughts
Are wandering far; there should be one to share
This awful and majestic solitude
Of sea and heaven with me.

[PROCIDA *enters unobserved.*

It is the hour
He named, and yet he comes not.

Pro. (*coming forward*). He is here.

Raim. Now, thou mysterious stranger—thou, whose glance
Doth fix itself on memory, and pursue
Thought like a spirit, haunting its lone hours,
Reveal thyself; what art thou?

Pro. One whose life
Hath been a troubled stream, and made its way
Through rocks, and darkness, and a thousand storms
With still a mighty aim. But now the shades
Of eve are gathering round me, and I come
To this, my native land, that I may rest
Beneath its vines in peace.

Raim. Seekest thou for peace?
This is no land of peace; unless that deep
And voiceless terror, which doth freeze men's thoughts
Back to their source, and mantle its pale mien
With a dull hollow semblance of repose,
May so be called.

Pro. There are such calms full oft
Preceding earthquakes. But I have not been
So vainly schooled by fortune, and inured
To shape my course on peril's dizzy brink,
That it should irk my spirit to put on
Such guise of hushed submissiveness as best
May suit the troubled aspect of the times.

Raim. Why, then, thou art welcome, stranger, to the land
Where most disguise is needful.—He were bold
Who now should wear his thoughts upon his brow
Beneath Sicilian skies. The brother's eye
Doth search distrustfully the brother's face;
And friends, whose undivided lives have drawn
From the same past their long remembrances,
Now meet in terror, or no more; lest hearts
Full to o'erflowing, in their social hour,
Should pour out some rash word, which roving winds
Might whisper to our conquerors. This it is,
To wear a foreign yoke.

Pro. It matters not
To him who holds the mastery o'er his spirit,
And can suppress its workings, till endurance
Becomes as nature. We can tame ourselves
To all extremes, and there is that in life
To which we cling with most tenacious grasp,

Even when its lofty aims are all reduced
To the poor common privilege of breathing.
—Why dost thou turn away?
Raim. What wouldst thou with me?
I deemed thee, by the ascendant soul which lived
And made its throne on thy commanding brow
One of a sovereign nature, which would scorn
So to abase its high capacities
For aught on earth. But thou art like the rest.
What wouldst thou with me?
Pro. I would counsel thee.
Thou must do that which men—ay, valiant men—
Hourly submit to do; in the proud court,
And in the stately camp, and at the board
Of midnight revellers, whose flushed mirth is all
A strife, won hardly. Where is he whose heart
Lies bare, through all its foldings, to the gaze
Of mortal eye? If vengeance wait the foe,
Or fate the oppressor, 'tis in depths concealed
Beneath a smiling surface.—Youth, I say,
Keep thy soul down! Put on a mask!—'tis worn
Alike by power and weakness, and the smooth
And specious intercourse of life requires
Its aid in every scene.
Raim. Away, dissembler!
Life hath its high and its ignoble tasks,
Fitted to every nature. Will the free
And royal eagle stoop to learn the arts
By which the serpent wins his spellbound prey?
It is because I *will* not clothe myself
In a vile garb of coward semblances,
That now, e'en now, I struggle with my heart,
To bid what most I love a long farewell,
And seek my country on some distant shore,
Where such things are unknown!
Pro. (*exultingly*). Why, this is joy:
After a long conflict with the doubts and fears,
And the poor subtleties, of meaner minds,
To meet a spirit, whose bold elastic wing
Oppression hath not crushed. High-hearted youth,
Thy father, should his footsteps e'er again
Visit these shores——
Raim. My father! what of him?
Speak! was he known to thee?
Pro. In distant lands
With him I've traversed many a wild, and looked
On many a danger; and the thought that thou
Wert smiling then in peace, a happy boy,
Oft through the storm hath cheered him.
Raim. Dost thou deem
That still he lives! Oh! if it be in chains,
In woe, in poverty's obscurest cell,
Say but he lives—and I will track his steps
E'en to earth's verge!

Pro. It may be that he lives,
Though long his name hath ceased to be a word
Familiar in man's dwellings. But its sound
May yet be heard! Raimond di Procida,
Rememberest thou thy father?
Raim. From my mind
His form hath faded long, for years have passed
Since he went forth to exile: but a vague,
Yet powerful image of deep majesty,
Still dimly gathering round each thought of him,
Doth claim instinctive reverence; and my love
For his inspiring name hath long become
Part of my being.
Pro. Raimond! doth no voice
Speak to thy soul, and tell thee whose the arms
That would enfold thee now? My son! my son!
Raim. Father! Oh God!—my father! Now I know
Why my heart woke before thee!
Pro. Oh! this hour
Makes hope reality; for thou art all
My dreams had pictured thee!
Raim. Yet why so long
E'en as a stranger hast thou crossed my paths.
One nameless and unknown?—and yet I felt
Each pulse within me thrilling to thy voice.
Pro. Because I would not link thy fate with mine,
Till I could hail the dayspring of that hope
Which now is gathering round us. Listen, youth!
Thou hast told *me* of a subdued and scorned
And trampled land, whose very soul is bowed
And fashioned to her chains:—but *I* tell *thee*
Of a most generous and devoted land,
A land of kindling energies; a land
Of glorious recollections!—proudly true
To the high memory of her ancient kings,
And rising, in majestic scorn, to cast
Her alien bondage off!
Raim. And where is this?
Pro. Here, in our isle, our own fair Sicily!
Her spirit is awake, and moving on,
In its deep silence mightier, to regain
Her place amongst the nations; and the hour
Of that tremendous effort is at hand.
Raim. Can it be thus indeed? Thou pourest new life
Through all my burning veins! I am as one
Awakening from a chill and death-like sleep
To the full glorious day.
Pro. Thou shalt hear more!
Thou shalt hear things which would—which *will*, arouse
The proud free spirits of our ancestors
E'en from their marble rest. Yet mark me well!
Be secret!—for along my destined path
I yet must darkly move.—Now, follow me,
And join a band of men, in whose high hearts
There lies a nation's strength.

Raim. My noble father!
Thy words have given me all for which I pined—
An aim, a hope, a purpose! And the blood
Doth rush in warmer currents through my veins,
As a bright fountain from its icy bonds
By the quick sun-stroke freed.
Pro. Ay, this is well!
Such natures burst men's chains!—Now, follow me.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Apartment in a Palace.*

ERIBERT, CONSTANCE.

Con. Will you not hear me? Oh! that they who need
Hourly forgiveness—they who do but live
While mercy's voice, beyond the eternal stars,
Wins the great Judge to listen, should be thus,
In their vain exercise of pageant power,
Hard and relentless! Gentle brother, yet
'Tis in your choice to imitate that heaven,
Whose noblest joy is pardon.
Eri. 'Tis too late.
You have a soft and moving voice, which pleads
With eloquent melody—but they must die.
Con. What!—die!—for words?—for breath, which leaves no trace
To sully the pure air, wherewith it blends,
And is, being uttered, gone? Why, 'twere enough
For such a venial fault to be deprived
One little day of man's free heritage,
Heaven's warm and sunny light! Oh! if you deem
That evil harbors in their souls, at least
Delay the stroke, till guilt, made manifest,
Shall bid stern justice wake.
Eri. I am not one
Of those weak spirits, that timorously keep watch
For fair occasions, thence to borrow hues
Of virtue for their needs. My school hath been
Where power sits crowned and armed. And, mark me, sister!
To a distrustful nature it might seem
Strange, that your lips thus earnestly should plead
For these Sicilian rebels. O'er *my* being
Suspicion holds no power. And yet, take note—
I have said, and they must die.
Con. Have you no fear?
Eri. Of what?—that heaven should fall?
Con. No!—But that earth
Should arm in madness. Brother! I have seen
Dark eyes bent on you, e'en midst festal throngs,
With such deep hatred settled in their glance,
My heart hath died within me.

Eri. Am I then
To pause, and doubt, and shrink, because a girl,
A dreaming girl, hath trembled at a look?
Con. Oh! looks are no illusions, when the soul,
Which may not speak in words, can find no way
But theirs to liberty! Have not these men
Brave sons, or noble brothers?
Eri. Yes! whose name
It rests with me to make a word of fear—
A sound forbidden midst the haunts of men.
Con. But not forgotten! Ah! beware, beware
—Nay, look not sternly on me. There is one
Of that devoted band, who yet will need
Years to be ripe for death. He is a youth,
A very boy, on whose unshaded cheek
The spring-time glow is lingering. 'Twas but now
His mother left me, with a timid hope
Just dawning in her breast; and I—I dared
To foster its faint spark. You smile!—Oh! then
He will be saved!
Eri. Nay, I but smile to think
What a fond fool is Hope! She may be taught
To deem that the great sun will change his course
To work her pleasure, or the tomb give back
Its inmates to her arms. In sooth, 'tis strange!
Yet, with your pitying heart, you should not thus
Have mocked the boy's sad mother:—I have said—
You should not thus have *mocked* her!—Now farewell!
[*Exit* ERIBERT.
Con. O brother! hard of heart!—for deeds like these
There must be fearful chastening, if on high
Justice doth hold her state. And I must tell
Yon desolate mother that her fair young son
Is thus to perish! Haply the dread tale
May slay *her* too—for heaven is merciful.
'Twill be a bitter task! [*Exit* CONSTANCE.

SCENE II.—*A ruined Tower, surrounded by Woods.*

PROCIDA, VITTORIA.

Pro. Thy vassals are prepared, then?
Vit. Yes; they wait
Thy summons to their task.
Pro. Keep the flame bright,
But hidden till this hour. Wouldst thou dare, lady,
To join our councils at the night's mid-watch,
In the lone cavern by the rock-hewn cross?
Vit. What should I shrink from?
Pro. Oh! the forest paths
Are dim and wild, e'en when the sunshine streams
Through their high arches; but when powerful night
Comes, with her cloudy phantoms, and her pale
Uncertain moonbeams, and the hollow sounds
Of her mysterious winds; their aspect *then*

Is of another and more fearful world—
A realm of indistinct and shadowy forms,
Waking strange thoughts almost too much for this—
Our frail terrestrial nature.
Vit. Well I know
All this, and more. Such scenes have been the abodes
Where through the silence of my soul have passed
Voices, and visions from the sphere of those
That have to die no more! No, doubt it not!
If such unearthly intercourse hath e'er
Been granted to our nature, 'tis to hearts
Whose love is with the dead. They, they alone
Unmaddened could sustain the fearful joy
And glory of its trances! At the hour
Which makes guilt tremulous, and peoples earth
And air with infinite viewless multitudes,
I will be with thee, Procida.
Pro. Thy presence
Will kindle nobler thoughts, and in the souls
Of suffering and indignant men, arouse
That which may strengthen our majestic cause
With yet a deeper power. Knowest thou the spot?
Vit. Full well. There is no scene so wild and lone,
In these dim woods, but I have visited
Its tangled shades.
Pro. At midnight, then, we meet.
[*Exit* PROCIDA.
Vit. Why should I fear? Thou wilt be with me, thou,
The immortal dream and shadow of my soul,
Spirit of him I love! that meetest me still
In loneliness and silence; in the noon
Of the wild night, and in the forest depths,
Known but to me; for whom thou givest the winds
And sighing leaves a cadence of thy voice,
Till my heart faints with that o'erthrilling joy!
—Thou wilt be with me there, and lend my lips
Words, fiery words, to flush dark cheeks with shame
That thou art unavenged! [*Exit* VITTORIA.

SCENE III.—*A Chapel with a Monument, on which is laid a sword.—Moonlight.*

PROCIDA, RAIMOND, MONTALBA.

Mon. And know ye not my story?
Pro. In the lands
Where I have been a wanderer, your deep wrongs
Were numbered with our country's; but their tale
Came only in faint echoes to mine ear.
I would fain hear it now.
Mon. Hark! while you spoke,
There was a voice-like murmur in the breeze,
Which even like death came o'er me. 'Twas a night
Like this, of clouds contending with the moon,
A night of sweeping winds, of rustling leaves,

And swift wild shadows floating o'er the earth,
Clothed with a phantom life, when, after years
Of battle and captivity, I spurred
My good steed homewards. Oh! what lovely dreams
Rose on my spirit! There were tears and smiles,
But all of joy! And there were bounding steps,
And clinging arms, whose passionate clasp of love
Doth twine so fondly round the warrior's neck
When his plumed helm is doffed.—Hence, feeble thoughts!
—I am sterner now, yet once such dreams were mine!

Raim. And were they realized?

Mon. Youth! Ask me not,
But listen! I drew near my own fair home—
There was no light along its walls, no sound
Of bugle pealing from the watch-tower's height
At my approach, although my trampling steed
Made the earth ring, yet the wide gates were thrown
All open. Then my heart misgave me first,
And on the threshold of my silent hall
I paused a moment, and the wind swept by
With the same deep and dirge-like tone which pierced
My soul e'en now! I called—my struggling voice
Gave utterance to my wife's, my children's names.
They answered not. I roused my failing strength,
And wildly rushed within.—And they were there.

Raim. And was all well?

Mon. Ay, well!—for death is well:
And they were all at rest! I see them yet,
Pale in their innocent beauty, which had failed
To stay the assassin's arm!

Raim. Oh, righteous heaven!
Who had done this?

Mon. Who?

Pro. Canst thou question, *who?*
Whom hath the earth to perpetrate such deeds,
In the cold-blooded revelry of crime,
But those whose yoke is on us?

Raim. Man of woe!
What words hath pity for despair like thine?

Mon. Pity!—fond youth!—My soul disdains the grief
Which doth unbosom its deep secrecies
To ask a vain companionship of tears,
And so to be relieved!

Pro. For woes like these
There is no sympathy but vengeance.

Mon. None!
Therefore I brought you hither, that your hearts
Might catch the spirit of the scene! Look round!
We are in the awful presence of the dead;
Within yon tomb *they* sleep, whose gentle blood
Weighs down the murderer's soul. *They* sleep!—but I
Am wakeful o'er their dust! I laid my sword,
Without its sheath, on their sepulchral stone,
As on an altar; and the eternal stars,

And heaven, and night bore witness to my vow,
No more to wield it, save in one great cause—
The vengeance of the grave! And now the hour
Of that atonement comes!

[*He takes the sword from the tomb.*

Raim. My spirit burns!
And my full heart almost to bursting swells
—Oh, for the day of battle!

Pro. Raimond, they
Whose souls are dark with guiltless blood must die,
But not in battle.

Raim. How, my father?

Pro. No!
Look on that sepulchre, and it will teach
Another lesson. But the appointed hour
Advances. Thou wilt join our chosen band,
Noble Montalba?

Mon. Leave me for a time,
That I may calm my soul by intercourse
With the still dead, before I mix with men
And with their passions. I have nursed for years,
In silence and in solitude, the flame
Which doth consume me; and it is not used
Thus to be looked or breathed on. Procida!
I would be tranquil—or appear so—ere
I join your brave confederates. Through my heart
There struck a pang—but it will soon have passed.

Pro. Remember!—in the cavern by the cross.
Now follow me, my son.

[*Exeunt* PROCIDA *and* RAIMOND.

Mon. (*after a pause, leaning on the tomb.*) Said he
"*My son?*" Now, why should this man's life
Go down in hope, thus resting on a son,
And I be desolate? How strange a sound
Was that—"*my son!*" I had a boy, who might
Have worn as free a soul upon his brow
As doth this youth. Why should the thought of *him*
Thus haunt me? When I tread the peopled ways
Of life again, I shall be passed each hour
By fathers with their children, and I must
Learn calmly to look on. Methinks 'twere now
A gloomy consolation to behold
All men bereft as I am! But away,
Vain thoughts!—One task is left for blighted hearts,
And it shall be fulfill'd. [*Exit* MONTALBA.

SCENE IV.—*Entrance of a cave, surrounded by Rocks and Forests. A rude Cross seen among the Rocks.*

PROCIDA, RAIMOND.

Pro. And is it thus, beneath the solemn skies
Of midnight, and in solitary caves,
Where the wild forest creatures make their lair—

Is't thus the chiefs of Sicily must hold
The councils of their country?
Raim. Why, such scenes
In their primeval majesty, beheld
Thus by faint starlight, and the partial glare
Of the red-streaming lava, will inspire
Far deeper thoughts than pillared halls, wherein
Statesmen hold weary vigils. Are we not
O'ershadowed by that Etna, which of old
With its dread prophecies, hath struck dismay
Through tyrants' hearts, and bade them seek a home
In other climes? Hark! from its depths, e'en now,
What hollow moans are sent!

Enter MONTALBA, GUIDO, *and other* SICILIANS.

Pro. Welcome, my brave associates!—We can share
The wolf's wild freedom here! The oppressor's haunt
Is not midst rocks and caves. Are we all met?
Sicilians. All, all!
Pro. The torchlight, swayed by every gust,
But dimly shows your features.—Where is he
Who from his battles had returned to breathe
Once more without a corslet, and to meet
The voices and the footsteps and the smiles
Blent with his dreams of home? Of that dark tale
The rest is known to vengeance! Art thou here,
With thy deep wrongs, and resolute despair,
Childless Montalba?
Mon. (*advancing*). He is at thy side.
Call on that desolate father in the hour
When his revenge is nigh.
Pro. Thou, too, come forth,
From thine own halls an exile! Dost thou make
The mountain-fastnesses thy dwelling still,
While hostile banners o'er thy rampart walls
Wave their proud blazonry?
First Sicilian. Even so. I stood
Last night before my own ancestral towers
An unknown outcast, while the tempest beat
On my bare head. What recked it? There was joy
Within, and revelry; the festive lamps
Were streaming from each turret, and gay songs
I' the stranger's tongue made mirth. They little deemed
Who hear their melodies! But there are thoughts
Best nurtured in the wild; there are dread vows
Known to the mountain-echoes. Procida!
Call on the outcast when revenge is nigh.
Pro. I knew a young Sicilian—one whose heart
Should be all fire. On that most guilty day
When, with our martyred Conradin, the flower
Of the land's knighthood perished; he of whom
I speak, a weeping boy, whose innocent tears
Melted a thousand hearts that dared not aid,
Stood by the scaffold with extended arms,

Calling upon his father, whose last look
Turned full on him its parting agony.
The father's blood gushed o'er him! and the boy
Then dried his tears, and with a kindling eye,
And a proud flush on his young cheek, looked up
To the bright heaven.—Doth he remember still
That bitter hour?

Second Sicilian. He bears a sheathless sword!
—Call on the orphan when revenge is nigh

Pro. Our band shows gallantly—but there are men
Who should be with us now, had they not dared
In some wild moment of festivity
To give their full hearts way, and breathe a wish
For freedom!—and some traitor—it might be
A breeze perchance—bore the forbidden sound
To Eribert: so they must die—unless
Fate (who at times is wayward) should select
Some other victim first! But have they not
Brothers or sons among us?

Gui. Look on me!
I have a brother—a young high-souled boy,
And beautiful as a sculptor's dream, with brow
That wears amidst its dark rich curls, the stamp
Of inborn nobleness. In truth, he is
A glorious creature! But his doom is sealed
With theirs of whom ye spoke; and I have knelt—
Ay, scorn me not! 'twas for his life—I knelt
E'en at the viceroy's feet, and he put on
That heartless laugh of cold malignity
We know so well, and spurned me. But the stain,
Of shame like this takes blood to wash it off,
And *thus* it shall be cancelled! Call on me,
When the stern moment of revenge is nigh.

Pro. I call upon thee *now!* The land's high soul
Is roused, and moving onward, like a breeze
Or a swift sunbeam, kindling nature's hues
To deeper life before it. In his chains,
The peasant dreams of freedom!—Ay, 'tis thus
Oppression fans the imperishable flame
With most unconscious hands. No praise be hers
For what she blindly works! When slavery's cup
O'erflows its bounds, the creeping poison, meant
To dull our senses, through each burning vein
Pours fever, lending a delirious strength
To burst man's fetters. And they *shall* be burst!
I have hoped, when hope seemed frenzy; but a power
Abides in human will, when bent with strong
Unswerving energy on one great aim,
To make and rule its fortunes! I have been
A wanderer in the fulness of my years,
A restless pilgrim of the earth and seas,
Gathering the generous thoughts of other lands,
To aid our holy cause. And aid is near:
But we must give the signal. Now, before

The majesty of yon pure heaven, whose eye
Is on our hearts—whose righteous arm befriends
The arm that strikes for freedom—speak! decree
The fate of our oppressors.
Mon. Let them fall.
When dreaming least of peril!—When the heart,
Basking in sunny pleasure, doth forget
That hate may smile, but sleeps not. Hide the sword
With a thick veil of myrtle; and in halls
Of banqueting, where the full wine-cup shines
Red in the festal torchlight, meet we there,
And bid them welcome to the feast of death.
Pro. Thy voice is low and broken, and thy words
Scarce meet our ears.
Mon. Why, then, I thus repeat
Their import. Let the avenging sword burst forth
In some free festal hour—and woe to him
Who first shall spare!
Raim. Must innocence and guilt
Perish alike?
Mon. Who talks of innocence?
When hath *their* hand been stayed for innocence?
Let them all perish!—Heaven will choose its own.
Why should *their* children live? The earthquake whelms
Its undistinguished thousands, making graves
Of peopled cities in its path—and this
Is heaven's dread justice—ay, and it is well!
Why then should *we* be tender, when the skies
Deal thus with man? What if the infant bleed?
Is there not power to hush the mother's pangs?
What if the youthful bride perchance should fall
In her triumphant beauty? Should we pause?
As if death were not mercy to the pangs
Which make our lives the records of our woes?
Let them all perish! And if one be found
Amidst our band to stay the avenging steel
For pity, or remorse, or boyish love,
Then be his doom as theirs! [*A pause.*
Why gaze ye thus?
Brethren, what means your silence!
Sicilians. Be it so!
If one among us stay the avenging steel
For love or pity, be his doom as theirs!
Pledge we our faith to this!
Raim. (*rushing forward indignantly*). Our faith to *this!*
No! I but *dreamt* I heard it! Can it be?
My countrymen, my father!—Is it thus
That freedom should be won? Awake!—awake
To loftier thoughts! Lift up, exultingly,
On the crowned heights and to the sweeping winds,
Your glorious banner! Let your trumpet's blast
Make the tombs thrill with echoes! Call aloud,
Proclaim from all your hills, the land shall bear
The stranger's yoke no longer! What is he

Who carries on his practised lip a smile,
Beneath his vest a dagger, which but waits
Till the heart bounds with joy, to still its beatings?
That which our nature's instinct doth recoil from,
And our blood curdle at—ay, yours and mine—
A murderer! Heard ye? Shall that name with ours
Go down to after days? O friends! a cause
Like that for which we rise, hath made bright names
Of the elder time as rallying-words to men—
Sounds full of might and immortality!
And shall not ours be such?

Mon. Fond dreamer, peace!
Fame! What is fame? Will our unconscious dust
Start into thrilling rapture from the grave,
At the vain breath of praise? I tell thee, youth,
Our souls are parched with agonizing thirst,
Which must be quenched though death were in the draught:
We must have vengeance, for our foes have left
No other joy unblighted.

Pro. O, my son!
The time is past for such high dreams as thine
Thou knowest not whom we deal with: knightly faith
And chivalrous honor are but things whereon
They cast disdainful pity. We must meet.
Falsehood with wiles, and insult with revenge,
And, for our names—whate'er the deeds by which
We burst our bondage—is it not enough
That in the chronicle of days to come,
We, through a bright "For Ever," shall be called
The men who saved their country?

Raim. Many a land
Hath bowed beneath the yoke, and then arisen
As a strong lion rending silken bonds,
And on the open field, before high heaven,
Won such majestic vengeance as hath made
Its name a power on earth. Ay, nations own
It is enough of glory to be called
The children of the mighty, who redeemed
Their native soil—but not by means like these.

Mon. I have no children. Of Montalba's blood
Not one red drop doth circle through the veins
Of ought that breathes! Why, what have *I* to do
With far futurity? My spirit lives
But in the past. Away! when thou dost stand
On this fair earth as doth a blasted tree
Which the warm sun revives not, *then* return,
Strong in thy desolation: but till then,
Thou art not for our purpose; we have need
Of more unshrinking hearts.

Raim. Montalba! know
I shrink from crime alone. Oh! if my voice
Might yet have power among you, I would say,
Associates, leaders, *be* avenged! but yet
As knights, as warriors!

Mon. Peace! Have we not borne
The indelible taint of contumely and chains?
We *are not* knights and warriors. Our bright crests
Have been defiled and trampled to the earth.
Boy! we are slaves—and our revenge shall be
Deep as a slave's disgrace.
Raim. Why, then, farewell:
I leave you to your counsels. He that still
Would hold his lofty nature undebased,
And his name pure, were but a loiterer here.
Pro. And is it thus indeed?—dost *thou* forsake
Our cause, my son!
Raim. O, father! what proud hopes
This hour hath blighted! Yet, whate'er betide,
It is a noble privilege to look up
Fearless in heaven's bright face—and this is mine.
And shall be still. [*Exit* RAIMOND.
Pro. He's gone!—Why, let it be!
I trust our Sicily hath many a son
Valiant as mine. Associates! 'tis decreed
Our foes shall perish. We have but to name
The hour, the scene, the signal.
Mon. It should be
In the full city, when some festival
Hath gathered throngs, and lulled infatuate hearts
To brief security. Hark! is there not
A sound of hurrylng footsteps on the breeze?
We are betrayed.—Who art thou?

VITTORIA *enters.*

Pro. *One* alone
Should be thus daring. Lady, lift the veil
That shades thy noble brow.
[*She raises her veil, the Sicilians draw back with respect.*
Sicilians. The affianced bride
Of our lost king!
Pro. And more, Montalba; know
Within this form there dwells a soul as high
As warriors in their battles e'er have proved,
Or patriots on the scaffold.
Vit. Valiant men!
I come to ask your aid. You see me, one
Whose widowed youth hath all been consecrate
To a proud sorrow, and whose life is held
In token and memorial of the dead.
Say, is it meet that lingering thus on earth,
But to behold one great atonement made,
And keep one name from fading in men's hearts,
A tyrant's will should force me to profane
Heaven's altar with unhallowed vows—and live
Stung by the keen unutterable scorn
Of my own bosom, live—another's bride?
Sicilians. Never! oh, never! Fear not, noble lady,
Worthy of Conradin!

Vit. Yet hear me still—
His bride, that Eribert's, who notes our tears
With his insulting eye of cold derision.
And, could he pierce the depths where feeling works,
Would number e'en our agonies as crimes.
—Say, is this meet?
Gui. We deemed these nuptials, lady,
Thy willing choice; but 'tis a joy to find
Thou art noble still. Fear not; by all our wrongs,
This shall not be.
Pro. Vittoria, thou art come
To ask *our* aid—but we have need of thine.
Know, the completion of our high designs
Requires—a festival; and it must be
Thy bridal!
Vit. Procida!
Pro. Nay, start not thus.
'Tis no hard task to bind your raven hair
With festal garlands, and to bid the song
Rise, and the wine-cup mantle. No—nor yet
To meet your suitor at the glittering shrine,
Where death, not love, awaits him!
Vit. Can my soul
Dissemble thus?
Pro. We have no other means
Of winning our great birthright back from those
Who have usurped it, than so lulling them
Into vain confidence, that they may deem
All wrongs forgot; and this may be best done
By what I ask of thee.
Mon. Then we will mix
With the flushed revellers, making their gay feast
The harvest of the grave.
Vit. A bridal day!
—Must it be so? Then, chiefs of Sicily,
I bid you to my nuptials! but be there
With your bright swords unsheathed, for thus alone
My guests should be adorned.
Pro. And let thy banquet
Be soon announced; for there are noble men
Sentenced to die, for whom we fain would purchase
Reprieve with other blood.
Vit. Be it then the day
Preceding that appointed for their doom.
Gui. My brother! thou shalt live! Oppression boasts
No gift of prophecy!—It but remains
To name our signal, chiefs!
Mon. The Vesper-bell!
Pro. Even so—the Vesper-bell, whose deep-toned peal
Is heard o'er land and wave. Part of our band,
Wearing the guise of antic revelry,
Shall enter, as in some fantastic pageant,
The halls of Eribert; and at the hour
Devoted to the sword's tremendous task,

I follow with the rest. The Vesper-bell!
That sound shall wake the avenger; for 'tis come,
The time when power is in a voice, a breath,
To burst the spell which bound us. But the night
Is waning, with her stars, which, one by one
Warn us to part. Friends, to your homes!—your *homes?*
That name is yet to win. Away! prepare
For our next meeting in Palermo's walls.
The Vesper-bell! Remember!
Sicilians. Fear us not.
The Vesper-bell! [*Exeunt omnes.*

ACT III.

Scene I.—*Apartment in a Palace.*

Eribert, Vittoria.

Vit. Speak not of love—it is a word with deep
Strange magic in its melancholy sound,
To summon up the dead; and they should rest,
At such an hour forgotten. There are things
We must throw from us, when the heart would gather
Strength to fulfil its settled purposes;
Therefore, no more of love! But if to robe
This form in bridal ornaments—to smile
(I *can* smile yet) at thy gay feast, and stand
At the altar by thy side;—if this be deemed
Enough, it shall be done.
Eri. My fortune's star
Doth rule the ascendant still! (*Apart*)—If not of love
Then pardon, lady, that I speak of *joy*,
And with exulting heart——
Vit. There *is* no joy!
—Who shall look through the far futurity,
And, as the shadowy visions of events
Develop on his gaze, midst their dim throng,
Dare, with oracular mien, to point, and say,
"This will bring happiness?" Who shall do this?
—Who, thou and I, and all! There's One, who sits
In His own bright tranquillity enthroned,
High o'er all storms, and looking far beyond
Their thickest clouds! but we, from whose dull eyes
A grain of dust hides the great sun—e'en *we*
Usurp his attributes, and talk, as seers,
Of future joy and grief!
Eri. Thy words are strange.
Yet will I hope that peace at length shall settle
Upon thy troubled heart, and add soft grace
To thy majestic beauty. Fair Vittoria!
Oh! if my cares——

Vit. I know a day shall come
Of peace to all. Even from my darkened spirit
Soon shall each restless wish be exorcised
Which haunts it now, and I shall then lie down
Serenely to repose. Of this no more.
I have a boon to ask.
Eri. Command my power,
And deem it thus most honored.
Vit. Have I then
Soared such an eagle pitch, as to command
The mighty Eribert?—And yet 'tis meet;
For I bethink me now, I should have worn
A *crown* upon this forehead. Generous lord!
Since thus you give me freedom, know, there is
An hour I have loved from childhood, and a sound
Whose tones, o'er earth and ocean sweetly bearing
A sense of deep repose, have lulled me oft
To peace—which is forgetfulness; I mean
The Vesper-bell. I pray you let it be
The summons to our bridal. Hear you not?
To our fair bridal!
Eri. Lady, let your will
Appoint each circumstance. I am too blessed,
Proving my homage thus.
Vit. Why, then, 'tis mine
To rule the glorious fortunes of the day,
And I may be content. Yet such remains
For thought to brood on, and I would be left
Alone with my resolves. King Eribert!
(Whom I command so absolutely) now
Part we a few brief hours; and doubt not, when
I'm at thy side once more, but I shall stand
There—to the last!
Eri. Your smiles are troubled, lady—
May they ere long be brighter! Time will seem
Slow till the Vesper-bell.
Vit. 'Tis lovers' phrase
To say—Time lags; and therefore meet for you;
But with an equal pace the hours move on,
Whether they bear, on their swift silent wing,
Pleasure or—fate.
Eri. Be not so full of thought
On such a day. Behold, the skies themselves
Look on my joy with a triumphant smile
Unshadowed by a cloud.
Vit. 'Tis very meet
That heaven (which loves the just) should wear a smile
In honor of his fortunes. Now, my lord,
Forgive me if I say farewell until
The appointed hour.
Eri. Lady, a brief farewell. [*Exeunt separately.*

SCENE II.—*The Sea-Shore.*

PROCIDA, RAIMOND.

Pro. And dost thou still refuse to share the glory
Of this, our daring enterprise?
Raim. Oh, father!
I, too, have dreamt of glory, and the word
Hath to my soul been as a trumpet's voice,
Making my nature sleepless. But the deeds
Whereby 'twas won—the high exploits, whose tale
Bids the heart burn, were of another cast
Than such as thou requirest.
Pro. Every deed
Hath sanctity, if bearing for its aim
The freedom of our country; and the sword
Alike is honored in the patriot's hand,
Searching, 'midst warrior hosts, the heart which gave
Oppression birth, or flashing through the gloom
Of the still chamber, o'er its troubled couch,
At dead of night.
Raim. (*turning away*). There is no path but one
For noble natures.
Pro. Wouldst thou ask the man
Who to the earth hath dashed a nation's chains,
Rent as with heaven's own lightning, by what *means*
The glorious end was won? Go, swell the acclaim!
Bid the deliverer, hail! and if his path
To that most bright and southern destiny,
Hath led o'er trampled thousands, be it called
A stern necessity, but not a crime!
Raim. Father! my soul yet kindles at the thought
Of nobler lessons, in my boyhood learned,
Even from thy voice. The high remembrances
Of other days are stirring in the heart
Where *thou* didst plant them; and they speak of men
Who needed no vain sophistry to gild
Acts that would bear heaven's light—and such be mine!
O father! is it yet too late to draw
The praise and blessing of all valiant hearts
On our most righteous cause?
Pro. What wouldst thou do?
Raim. I would go forth, and rouse the indignant land
To generous combat. Why should freedom strike
Mantled with darkness? Is there not more strength
Even in the waving of her single arm
Than hosts can wield against her? *I* would rouse
That spirit whose fire doth press resistless on
To its proud sphere—the stormy field of fight!
Pro. Ay! and give time and warning to the foe
To gather all his might! It *is* too late.
There is a work to be this eve begun,
When rings the Vesper-bell; and, long before
To-morrow's sun hath reached, i' the noonday heaven,

His throne of burning glory, every sound
Of the Provençal tongue within our walls,
As by one thunderstroke—(you are pale, my son)—
Shall be forever silenced!
Raim. What! such sounds
As falter on the lip of infancy,
In its imperfect utterance? or are breathed
By the fond mother, as she lulls her babe?
Or in sweet hymns, upon the twilight air
Poured by the timid maid? Must all alike
Be stilled in death? and wouldst thou tell my heart
There is no crime in *this?*
Pro. Since thou dost feel
Such horror of our purpose, in thy power
Are means that might avert it.
Raim. Speak! oh speak!
Pro. How would those rescued thousands bless thy name
Shouldst thou betray us!
Raim. Father! I can bear—
Ay, proudly woo—the keenest questioning
Of thy soul gifted eye, which almost seems
To claim a part of heaven's dread royalty,
—The power that searches thought.
Pro (*after a pause*). Thou hast a brow
Clear as the day—and yet I doubt thee, Raimond!
Whether it be that I have learned distrust
From a long look through man's deep-folded heart;
Whether my paths have been so seldom crossed
By honor and fair mercy, that they seem
But beautiful deceptions, meeting thus
My unaccustomed gaze: howe'er it be—
I doubt thee! See thou waver not—take heed.
Time lifts the veil from all things! [*Exit* PROCIDA.
Raim. And 'tis thus
Youth fades from off our spirit; and the robes
Of beauty and of majesty, wherewith
We clothed our idols, drop! Oh, bitter day!
When, at the crushing of our glorious world,
We start, and find men thus! Yet be it so!
Is not my soul still powerful in *itself*
To realize its dreams? Ay, shrinking not
From the pure eye of heaven, my brow may well
Undaunted meet my father's. But away!
Thou shalt be saved, sweet Constance!—Love is yet
Mightier than vengeance. [*Exit* RAIMOND.

SCENE III.—*Gardens of a Palace.*

CONSTANCE, *alone.*

Con. There was a time when my thoughts wandered not
Beyond these fairy scenes!—when but to catch
The languid fragrance of the southern breeze
From the rich flowering citrons, or to rest,

Dreaming of some wild legend, in the shade
Of dark laurel foliage, was enough
Of happiness. How have these calm delights
Fled from before one passion, as the dews,
The delicate gems of morning, are exhaled
By the great sun! [RAIMOND *enters.*
Raimond! oh! now thou'rt come—
I read it in thy look—to say farewell
For the last time—the last!
Raim. No, best beloved!
I come to tell thee there is now no power
To part us but in death.
Con. I have dreamt of joy,
But never aught like this.—Speak yet again!
Say we shall part no more!
Raim. No more, if love
Can strive with darker spirits, and he is strong
In his immortal nature! all is changed
Since last we met. My father—keep the tale
Secret from all, and most of all, my Constance,
From Eribert—my father is returned:
I leave thee not.
Con. Thy father! blessèd sound!
Good angels be his guard! Oh! if he knew
How my soul clings to thine, he could not hate
Even a Provençal maid! Thy father!—now
Thy soul will be at peace, and I shall see
The sunny happiness of earlier days
Look from thy brow once more! But how is this?
Thine eye reflects not the glad soul of mine;
And in thy look is that which ill befits
A tale of joy.
Raim. A dream is on my soul.
I see a slumberer, crowned with flowers, and smiling
As in delighted visions, on the brink
Of a dread chasm; and this strange fantasy
Hath cast so deep a shadow o'er my thoughts,
I cannot but be sad.
Con. Why, let me sing
One of the sweet wild strains you love so well,
And this will banish it.
Raim. It may not be.
Oh gentle Constance! go not forth to-day:
Such dreams are ominous.
Con. Have you then forgot
My brother's nuptial feast? I must be one
Of the gay train attending to the shrine
His stately bride. In sooth, my step of joy
Will print earth lightly now.—What fearest thou, love?
Look all around! the blue transparent skies,
And sunbeams pouring a more buoyant life
Through each glad thrilling vein, will brightly chase
All thought of evil. Why, the very air
Breathes of delight! Through all its glowing realm

Doth music blend with fragrance; and e'en here
The city's voice of jubilee is heard,
Till each light leaf seems trembling unto sounds
Of human joy!

Raim. There lie far deeper things—
Things that may darken thought for life, beneath
That city's festive semblance. I have passed
Through the glad multitudes, and I have marked
A stern intelligence in weeping eyes,
Which deemed their flash unnoticed, and a quick,
Suspicious vigilance, too intent to clothe
Its mien with carelessness; and now and then,
A hurrying start, a whisper, or a hand
Pointing by stealth to some one, singled out
Amidst the reckless throng. O'er all is spread
A mantling flush of revelry, which may hide
Much from unpractised eyes; but lighter signs
Have been prophetic oft.

Con. I tremble!—Raimond!
What may these things portend?

Raim. It was a day
Of festival like this; the city sent
Up through her sunny firmament a voice
Joyous as now; when, scarcely heralded
By one deep moan, forth from his cavernous depths
The earthquake burst; and the wide splendid scene
Became one chaos of all fearful things,
Till the brain whirled, partaking the sick motion
Of rocking palaces.

Con. And then didst thou,
My noble Raimond! through the dreadful paths
Laid open by destruction, past the chasms,
Whose fathomless clefts, a moment's work, had given
One burial unto thousands, rush to save
Thy trembling Constance! she who lives to bless
Thy generous love, that still the breath of heaven
Wafts gladness to her soul!

Raim. Heaven!—heaven is just!
And being so, must guard thee, sweet one, still.
Trust none beside. Oh! the omnipotent skies
Make their wrath manifest, but insidious *man*
Doth compass those he hates with secret snares,
Wherein lies fate. Know, danger walks abroad,
Masked as a reveller. Constance! oh! by all
Our tried affection, all the vows which bind
Our hearts together, meet me in these bowers,
Here, I adjure thee, meet me, when the bell
Doth sound for vesper prayer!

Con. And knowest thou not
'Twill be the bridal hour?

Raim. It will not, love!
That hour will bring no bridal! Naught of this
To human ear; but speed thou hither—fly,
When evening brings that signal. Dost thou heed?

This is no meeting by a lover sought
To breathe fond tales, and make the twilight groves
And stars attest his vows; deem thou not so,
Therefore denying it! I tell thee, Constance!
If thou wouldst save me from such fierce despair
As falls on man, beholding all he loves
Perish before him, while his strength can but
Strive with his agony—thou'lt meet me then.
Look on me, love!—I am not oft so moved—
Thou'lt meet me?

Con. Oh! what mean thy words? If then
My steps are free,—I will. Be thou but calm.

Raim Be calm!—there is a cold and sullen calm,
And were my wild fears made realities,
It might be mine; but, in this dread suspense—
This conflict of all terrible fantasies,
There is no calm. Yet fear thou not, dear love!
I will watch o'er thee still. And now, farewell
Until that hour!

Con. My Raimond, fare thee well. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*Room in the Citadel of Palermo.*

ALBERTI, DE COUCI.

De Cou. Saidst thou this night?

Alb. This very night—and lo!
E'en now the sun declines.

De Cou. What! are they armed?

Alb. All armed, and strong in vengeance and despair.

De Cou. Doubtful and strange the tale! Why was not this
revealed before?

Alb. Mistrust me not, my lord!
That stern and jealous Procida hath kept.
O'er all my steps (as though he did suspect
The purposes, which oft his eye hath sought
To read in mine) a watch so vigilant,
I knew not how to warn thee, though for this
Alone I mingled with his bands—to learn
Their projects and their strength. Thou knowest my faith
To Anjou's house full well.

De Cou. How may we now
Avert the gathering storm? The viceroy holds
His bridal feast, and all is revelry.
'Twas a true-boding heaviness of heart
Which kept me from these nuptials.

Alb. Thou thyself
Mayst yet escape, and haply of thy bands
Rescue a part, ere long to wreak full vengeance
Upon these rebels. 'Tis too late to dream
Of saving Eribert. E'en shouldst thou rush
Before him with the tidings, in his pride
And confidence of soul, he would but laugh
Thy tale to scorn.

De Cou. He must not die unwarned,
Though it be all in vain. But thou, Alberti,
Rejoin thy comrades, lest thine absence wake
Suspicion in their hearts. Thou hast done well,
And shall not pass unguerdoned, should I live
Through the deep horrors of the approaching night.
Alb. Noble De Couci, trust me still. Anjou
Commands no heart more faithful than Alberti's.

[*Exit* ALBERTI.

De Cou. The grovelling slave!—And yet he spoke too true!
For Eribert, in blind elated joy,
Will scorn the warning voice. The day wanes fast,
And through the city, recklessly dispersed,
Unarmed and unprepared, my soldiers revel,
E'en on the brink of fate. I must away.

[*Exit* DE COUCI.

SCENE V.—*A Banqueting Hall. Provençal Nobles assembled.*

1*st Noble.* Joy be to this fair meeting! Who hath seen
The viceroy's bride?
2*d Noble.* I saw her as she passed
The gazing throngs assembled in the city.
'Tis said she hath not left for years, till now,
Her castle's wood-girt solitude. 'Twill gall
These proud Sicilians that her wide domains
Should be the conqueror's guerdon.
3*d Noble.* 'Twas their boast
With what fond faith she worshipped still the name
Of the boy Conradin. How will the slaves
Brook this new triumph of their lords?
2*d Noble.* In sooth,
It stings them to the quick. In the full streets
They mix with our Provençals, and assume
A guise of mirth, but it sits hardly on them.
'Twere worth a thousand festivals to see
With what a bitter and unnatural effort
They strive to smile!
1*st Noble.* Is this Vittoria fair?
2*d Noble.* Of a most noble mien; but yet her beauty
Is wild and awful, and her large dark eye
In its unsettled glances hath strange power,
From which thou'lt shrink as I did.
1*st Noble.* Hush! they come.

Enter ERIBERT, VITTORIA, CONSTANCE, *and others.*

Eri. Welcome, my noble friends!—there must not lower
One clouded brow to-day in Sicily!
—Behold my bride!
Nobles. Receive our homage, lady!
Vit. I bid all welcome. May the feast we offer
Prove worthy of such guests!
Eri. Look on her, friends,
And say if that majestic brow is not
Meet for a diadem?

'Tis well, my lord!
When memory's pictures fade—'tis kindly done
To brighten their dimmed hues!
1st Noble (apart). Marked you her glance?
2d Noble (apart). What eloquent [illegible] was there? Yet!
the elate
Of heart, perceives it not.
Eri. Now to the feast!
Constance, you look not joyous. I have said
That all should smile to-day.
Con. Forgive me, brother;
The heart is wayward, and its guard of pomp
At times oppresses it.
Eri. Why, how is this?
Con. Voices of woe, and prayers of agony,
Unto my soul have risen, and left sad sounds
There echoing still. Yet would I fain be gay,
Since 'tis your wish. In truth, I should have been
A village maid.
Eri. But being as you are,
Not thus ignobly free, command your looks
(They may be taught obedience) to reflect
The aspect of the time.
Vit. And know, fair maid!
That, if in this unskilled, you stand alone
Amidst our court of pleasure.
Eri. To the feast!
Now let the red wine foam!—There should be mirth
When conquerors revel! Lords of this fair isle!
Your good swords' heritage, crown each bowl, and pledge
The present and the future! for they both
Look brightly on us. Dost thou smile, my bride?
Vit. Yes, Eribert!—thy prophecies of joy
Have taught e'en *me* to smile.
Eri. 'Tis well. To-day
I have won a fair and almost *royal* bride;
To-morrow let the bright sun speed his course,
To waft me happiness!—my proudest foes
Must die; and then my slumber shall be laid
On rose-leaves, with no envious fold to mar
The luxury of its visions!—Fair Vittoria,
Your looks are troubled!
Vit. It is strange—but oft,
Midst festal songs and garlands, o'er my soul
Death comes, with some dull image! as you spoke
Of those whose blood is claimed, I thought for them
Who, in a darkness thicker than the night
E'er wove with all her clouds, have pined so long.
How blessèd were the stroke which makes them things
Of that invisible world, wherein, we trust,
There is at least no bondage! But should *we*
From such a scene as this, where all earth's joys
Contend for mastery, and the very sense
Of life is rapture—should *we* pass, I say,

At once from such excitements to the void
And silent gloom of that which doth await us—
Were it not dreadful?
Eri. Banish such dark thoughts!
They ill beseem the hour.
Vit. There is no hour
Of this mysterious world, in joy or woe,
But they beseem it well! Why, what a slight,
Impalpable bound is that, the unseen, which severs
Being from death! And who can tell how near
Its misty brink he stands?
1*st Noble* (*aside*). What mean her words?
2*d Noble.* There's some dark mystery here.
Eri. No more of this!
Pour the bright juice, which Etna's glowing vines
Yield to the conquerors! And let music's voice
Dispel these ominous dreams! Wake, harp and song!
Swell out your triumph!

A Messenger enters bearing a letter.

Mes. Pardon, my good lord!
But this demands——
Eri. What means thy breathless haste,
And that ill-boding mien? Away! such looks,
Befit not hours like these.
Mes. The Lord De Couci
Bade me bear this, and say 'tis fraught with tidings
Of life and death.
Vit. (*hurriedly*). Is this a time for aught
But revelry? My lord, these dull intrusions
Mar the bright spirit of the festal scene!
Eri. (*to the Messenger*). Hence! tell the Lord De Couci, we will talk
Of life and death to-morrow. [*Exit Messenger.*
Let there be
Around me none but joyous looks to-day,
And strains whose very echoes wake to mirth!

(*A band of conspirators enter, to the sound of music, disguised as shepherds, bacchanals, &c.*)

Eri. What forms are these? What means this antic triumph?
Vit. 'Tis but a rustic pageant, by my vassals
Prepared to grace our bridal. Will you not
Hear their wild music? Our Sicilian vales
Have many a sweet and mirthful melody,
To which the glad heart bounds. Breathe ye some strain
Meet for the time, ye sons of Sicily!

(*One of the Maskers sings.*)

The festal eve, o'er earth and sky,
In her sunset robe looks bright,
And the purple hills of Sicily
With their vineyards laugh in light;

From the marble cities of her plains,
Glad voices mingling swell;
—But with yet more loud and lofty strains,
They shall hail the Vesper-bell!

Oh! sweet its tones, when the summer breeze
Their cadence wafts afar,
To float o'er the blue Sicilian seas,
As they gleam to the first pale star!
The shepherd greets them on his height,
The hermit in his cell;
—But a deeper voice shall breathe to-night
In the sound of the Vesper-bell!

[*The bell rings.*

Eri. It is the hour! Hark, hark!—my bride, our summons!
The altar is prepared and crowned with flowers,
That wait——

Vit. The victim! [*A tumult heard without.*

PROCIDA *and* MONTALBA *enter, with others, armed.*

Pro. Strike! the hour is come!

Vit. Welcome, avengers, welcome! Now, be strong!

[*The conspirators throw off their disguise, and rush with their swords drawn upon the Provençals.* ERIBERT *is wounded, and falls.*

Pro. Now hath fate reached thee in thy mid career,
Thou reveller in a nation's agonies!

[*The Provençals are driven off, pursued by the Sicilians.*

Con. (*supporting* ERIBERT). My brother! oh, my brother!

Eri. Have I stood
A leader in the battle-fields of kings,
To perish thus at last? Ay, by these pangs,
And this strange chill, that heavily doth creep,
Like a slow poison, through my curdling veins,
This should be—death! In sooth, a dull exchange
For the gay bridal feast!—

Voices (*without*). Remember Conradin!—spare none! spare none!

Vit. (*throwing off her bridal wreath and ornaments*). This is proud freedom! Now my soul may cast,
In generous scorn, her mantle of dissembling
To earth forever! And it is such joy,
As if a captive from his dull cold cell
Might soar at once, on chartered wing, to range
The realms of starred infinity! Away!
Vain mockery of a bridal wreath! The hour
For which stern patience ne'er kept watch in vain
Is come; and I may give my bursting heart
Full and indignant scope. Now, Eribert!
Believe in retribution! What! proud man!
Prince, ruler, conqueror! didst thou deem Heaven slept?
"Or that the unseen, immortal ministers,
Ranging the world to note e'en purposed crime

In burning characters, had laid aside
Their everlasting attributes for *thee?*"
Of blind security! He, in whose dread hand
The lightnings vibrate, holds them back until
The trampler of this goodly earth hath reached
His pyramid-height of power; that so his fall
May with more fearful oracles make pale
Man's crowned oppressors!

Con. Oh! reproach him not!
His soul is trembling on the dizzy brink
Of that dim world where passion may not enter.
Leave him in peace.

Voices (without). Anjou! Anjou!—De Couci, to the rescue!

Eri. (*half raising himself*). My brave Provençals! do ye combat still?
And I your chief am here! Now, now I feel
That death indeed is bitter!

Vit. Fare thee well!
Thine eyes so oft with their insulting smile
Have looked on man's last pangs, thou shouldst by this
Be perfect how to die! [*Exit* VITTORIA.

RAIMOND *enters.*

Raim. Away, my Constance!
Now is the time for flight. Our slaughtering bands
Are scattered far and wide. A little while
And thou shalt be in safety. Knowest thou not
That low sweet vale, where dwells the holy man,
Anselmo?—He whose hermitage is reared
Mid some old temple's ruins? Round the spot
His name hath spread so pure and deep a charm,
'Tis hallowed as a sanctuary, wherein
Thou shalt securely bide till this wild storm
Have spent its fury. Haste!

Con. I will not fly!
While in his heart there is one throb of life,
One spark in his dim eyes, I will not leave
The brother of my youth to perish thus,
Without one kindly bosom to sustain
His dying head.

Eri. The clouds are darkening round.
There are strange voices ringing in mine ear
That summon me—to what! But I have been
Used to command!—Away! I will not die
But on the field——

Con. (*kneeling by him*). O Heaven! be merciful
As thou art just!—for he is now where naught
But mercy can avail him.—It is past!

GUIDO *enters with his sword drawn.*

Gui. (*to* RAIMOND). I've sought thee long—why art thou lingering here?
Haste, follow me! Suspicion with thy name
Joins that word—*Traitor!*

Raim. Traitor!—Guido?
Gui. Yes.
Hast thou not heard, that, with his men-at-arms,
After vain conflict with a people's wrath,
De Couci hath escaped? And there are those
Who murmur that from *thee* the warning came
Which saved him from our vengeance. But e'en yet,
In the red current of Provençal blood,
That doubt may be effaced. Draw thy good sword,
And follow me!
Raim. And *thou* couldst doubt me, Guido!
'Tis come to this!—Away! mistrust me still.
I will not stain my sword with deeds like thine.
Thou knowest me not!
Gui. Raimond di Procida!—
If thou art he whom once I deemed so noble—
Call me thy friend no more! [*Exit* GUIDO.
Raim. (*after a pause*). Rise, dearest, rise!
Thy duty's task hath nobly been fulfilled,
E'en in the face of death; but all is o'er,
And this is now no place where nature's tears
In quiet sanctity may freely flow.
—Hark! the wild sounds that wait on fearful deeds
Are swelling on the winds, as the deep roar
Of fast-advancing billows; and for *thee*
I shame not thus to tremble—Speed! oh, speed! *Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Street in Palermo.*

PROCIDA *enters.*

Pro. How strange and deep a stillness loads the air,
As with the power of midnight! Ay, where death
Hath passed, there should be silence. But this hush
Of nature's heart, this breathlessness of all things,
Doth press on thought too heavily, and the sky,
With its dark robe of purple thunder-clouds,
Brooding in solemn masses o'er my spirit,
Weighs like an omen! Wherefore should this be?
Is not our task achieved—the mighty work
Of our deliverance? Yes, I should be joyous:
But this our feeble nature, with its quick
Instinctive superstitions, will drag down
The ascending soul. And I have fearful bodings
That treachery lurks amongst us.—Raimond! Raimond!
Oh, guilt ne'er made a mien like his its garb!
It cannot be!

MONTALBA, GUIDO, *and other Sicilians enter.*

Pro. Welcome! we meet in joy!
Now may we bear ourselves erect, resuming

The kingly port of freemen! Who shall dare,
After this proof of slavery's dread recoil,
To weave us chains again?—Ye have done well.
Mon. We *have* done well. There needs no choral song,
No shouting multitudes, to blazon forth
Our stern exploits. The *silence* of our foes
Doth vouch enough, and they are laid to rest,
Deep as the sword could make it. Yet our task
Is still but half achieved, since with his bands
De Couci hath escaped, and doubtless leads
Their footsteps to Messina, where our foes
Will gather all their strength. Determined hearts
And deeds to startle earth are yet required
To make the mighty sacrifice complete—
Where is thy son?
Pro. I know not. Once last night
He crossed my path, and with one stroke beat down
A sword just raised to smite me, and restored
My own, which in that deadly strife had been
Wrenched from my grasp: but when I would have pressed him
To my exulting bosom, he drew back,
And with a sad, and yet a scornful smile,
Full of strange meaning, left me. Since that hour
I have not seen him. Wherefore didst thou ask?
Mon. It matters not. We have deep things to speak of.
Knowest thou that we have traitors in our councils?
Pro. I know some voice in secret must have warned
De Couci, or his scattered bands had ne'er
So soon been marshalled, and in close array
Led Lence as from the field. Hast thou heard aught
That may develop this?
Mon. The guards we set
To watch the city gates, have seized, this morn,
One whose quick fearful glance, and hurried step
Betrayed his guilty purpose. Mark! he bore
(Amidst the tumult, deeming that his flight
Might all unnoticed pass) these scrolls to him—
The fugitive Provençal. Read and judge!
Pro. Where is this messenger?
Mon. Where *should* he be?—
They slew him in their wrath.
Pro. Unwisely done!
Give me the scrolls. [*He reads.*
Now, if there be such things
As may to death add sharpness, yet delay
The pang which gives release, if there be power
In execration, to call down the fires
Of yon avenging heaven, whose rapid shafts
But for such guilt were aimless; be they heaped
Upon the traitor's head! Scorn make his name
Her mark forever!
Mon. In our passionate blindness,
We send forth curses whose deep stings recoil
Oft on ourselves.

Pro. Whate'er fate hath of ruin
Fall on his house! What! to resign again
That freedom for whose sake our souls have now
Engrained themselves in blood! Why, who is he
That hath devised this treachery? To the scroll
Why fixed he not his name, so stamping it
With an immortal infamy, whose brand
Might warn men from him? Who should be so vile?
Alberti?—in his eye is that which ever
Shrinks from encountering mine!—But no! his race
Is of our noblest. Oh! he could not shame
That high descent! Urbino?—Conti?—No!
They are too deeply pledged. There's one name more!
—I cannot utter it! Now shall I read
Each face with cold suspicion, which doth blot
From man's high mien its native royalty,
And seal his noble forehead with the impress
Of its own vile imaginings! Speak your thoughts,
Montalba! Guido!—Who should this man be?

Mon. Why, what Sicilian youth unsheathed last night
His sword to aid our foes, and turned its edge
Against his country's chiefs?—he that did *this*,
May well be deemed for guiltier treason ripe.

Pro. And who is he?

Mon. Nay, ask thy son.

Pro. My son!
What should *he* know of such a recreant heart?
Speak, Guido! thou'rt his friend!

Gui. I would not wear
The brand of such a name!

Pro. How? what means this?
A flash of light breaks in upon my soul!
Is it to blast me? yet the fearful doubt
Hath crept in darkness through my thoughts before,
And been flung from them. Silence!—Speak not yet!
I would be calm and meet the thunder burst
With a strong heart. [*A pause.*
Now, what have I to hear?
Your tidings?

Gui. Briefly, 'twas your son did thus!
He hath disgraced your name.

Pro. My son did thus!
Are thy words oracles, that I should search
Their hidden meaning out? *What* did my son?
I have forgot the tale. Repeat it, quick!

Gui. 'Twill burst upon thee all too soon. While
Were busy at the dark and solemn rites
Of retribution; while we bathed the earth
In red libations, which will consecrate
The soil they mingled with to freedom's step
Through the long march of ages: 'twas his task
To shield from danger a Provençal maid,
Sister of him whose cold oppression stung
Our hearts to madness.

Mon. What! should she be spared
To keep that name from perishing on earth?
—I crossed them in their path, and raised my sword,
To smite her in her champion's arms. We fought.
The boy disarmed me! And I live to tell
My shame, and wreak my vengeance!
Gui. Who but he
Could warn De Couci, or devise the guilt
These scrolls reveal? Hath not the traitor still
Sought, with fair and specious eloquence,
To win us from our purpose? All things seem
Leagued to unmask him.
Mon. Know you not there came
E'en in the banquet's hour, from this De Couci,
One, bearing unto Eribert the tidings
Of all our purposed deeds? And have we not
Proof, as the noon-day clear, that Raimond loves
The sister of that tyrant?
Pro. There was one
Who mourned for being childless! Let him now
Feast o'er his children's graves, and I will join
The revelry!
Mon. (*apart*). You shall be childless too!
Pro. Wast you, Montalba!—Now rejoice, I say!
There is no name so near you, that its stains
Should call the fevered and indignant blood
To your dark cheek! But I will dash to earth
The weight that presses on my heart, and then
Be glad as thou art.
Mon. What means this, my lord?
Who hath seen gladness on Montalba's mien?
Pro. Why, should not all be glad who have no *sons*
To tarnish their bright name?
Mon. I am not used
To bear with mockery.
Pro. Friend! by yon high Heaven
I mock thee not! 'Tis a proud fate to live
Alone and unallied. Why, what's alone?
A word whose sense is—*free!*—Ay, free from all
The venomed stings implanted in the heart
By those it loves. Oh! I could laugh to think
Oh, the joy that riots in baronial halls,
When the word comes—"A son is born!"—A *son!*
They should say thus—"He that shall knit your brow
To furrows, not of years—and bid your eye
Quail its proud glance to tell the earth its shame,
Is born, and so rejoice!"—*Then* might we feast
And know the cause! Were it not excellent?
Mon. This is all idle. There are deeds to do:
Arouse thee, Procida!
Pro. Why, am I not
Calm as immortal justice! She can strike,
And yet be passionless—and thus will I.
I know thy meaning. Deeds to do!—tis well.

They shall be done ere thought on. Go ye forth:
There is a youth who calls himself my son,
His name is Raimond—in his eye is light
That shows like truth—but be not ye deceived!
Bear him in chains before us. We will sit
To-day in judgment and the skies will see
The strength which girds our nature. Will not this
Be glorious, brave Montalba? Linger not,
Ye tardy messengers! for there are things
Which ask the speed of storms. [*Exeunt* GUIDO *and others.*
Is not this well?

Mon. 'Tis noble. Keep thy spirit to this proud height—
(*Aside.*) And then be desolate like me! My woes
Will at the thought grow light.

Pro. What now remains
To be prepared? There should be solemn pomp
To grace a day like this. Ay, breaking hearts
Require a drapery to conceal their throbs
From cold inquiring eyes; and it must be
Ample and rich, that so their gaze may not
Explore what lies beneath. [*Exit* PROCIDA.

Mon. Now this is well!
—I hate this Procida; for he hath won
In all our councils that ascendancy
And mastery o'er bold hearts, which should have been
Mine by a thousand claims. Had *he* strength
Of wrongs like mine? No! for that name—his country—
He strikes; *my* vengeance hath a deeper fount:
But there's dark joy in this!—And fate hath barred
My soul from every other. [*Exit* MONTALBA.

SCENE II.—*A Hermitage surrounded by the Ruins of an Ancient Temple.*

CONSTANCE, ANSELMO.

Con. 'Tis strange he comes not! Is not this the still
And sultry hour of noon? He should have been
Here by the daybreak. Was there not a voice
—"No! 'tis the shrill cicada, with glad life
Peopling these marble ruins, as it sports
Amidst them in the sun." Hark! yet again!
No! no! forgive me, father! that I bring
Earth's restless griefs and passions, to disturb
The stillness of thy holy solitude:
My heart is full of care.

Ans. There is no place
So hallowed as to be unvisited
By mortal cares. Nay, whither should we go
With our deep griefs and passions, but to scenes
Lonely and still, where He that made our hearts
Will speak to them in whispers? I have known
Affliction too, my daughter.

Con. Hark! his step!
I know it well—he comes—my Raimond, welcome!

VITTORIA *enters*, CONSTANCE *shrinks back on perceiving her.*
Oh, Heaven! that aspect tells a fearful tale.
Vit. (*not observing her*). There is a cloud of horror on my soul;
And on thy words, Anselmo, peace doth wait,
Even as an echo, following the sweet close
Of some divine and solemn harmony:
Therefore I sought thee now. Oh! speak to me
Of holy things and names, in whose deep sound
Is power to bid the tempests of the heart
Sink, like a storm rebuked.
Ans. What recent grief
Darkens thy spirit thus?
Vit. I said not grief.
We should rejoice to-day, but joy is not
That which it hath been. In the flowers which wreath
Its mantling cup, there is a scent unknown,
Fraught with a strange delirium. All things now
Have changed their nature: still, I say, rejoice!
There is a cause, Anselmo! We are free—
Free and avenged! Yet on my soul there hangs
A darkness, heavy as the oppressive gloom
Of midnight fantasies. Ay, for this, too,
There is a cause.
Ans. How sayest thou, we are free?—
There may have raged, within Palermo's walls,
Some brief wild tumult; but too well I know
They call the stranger lord.
Vit. Who calls the *dead*
Conqueror or lord? Hush! breath it not aloud,
The wild winds must not hear it! Yet again,
I tell thee we are free!
Ans. Thine eye hath looked
On fearful deeds, for still their shadows hang
O'er its dark orb. Speak! I adjure thee: say,
How hath this work been wrought?
Vit. Peace! ask me not!
Why shouldst *thou* hear a tale to send thy blood
Back on its fount? We cannot wake them now!
The storm is in my soul, but *they* are all
At rest!—Ay, sweetly may the slaughtered babe
By its dead mother sleep; and warlike men,
Who, 'midst the slain have slumbered oft before,
Making their shield their pillow, may repose
Well, now their toils are done.—Is't not enough?
Con. Merciful heaven! have such things been? And yet
There is no shade come o'er the laughing sky!
—I am an outcast now.
Ans. O Thou whose ways
Clouds mantle fearfully! of all the blind
But terrible ministers that work thy wrath,
How much is *man* the fiercest! Others know
Their limits—yes! the earthquakes, and the storms,
And the volcanoes!—he alone o'erleaps

The bounds of retribution! Couldst thou gaze,
Vittoria! with thy woman's heart and eye,
On such scenes unmoved?
Vit. Was it for *me*
To stay the avenging sword? No, though it pierced
My very soul! Hark! hark! what thrilling shrieks
Ring through the air around me! Canst thou not
Bid them be hushed? Oh! look not on me thus!
Ans. Lady! thy thoughts lend sternness to the looks
Which are but sad! Have all then perished?—*all?*
Was there no mercy?
Vit. Mercy! it hath been
A word forbidden as the unhallowed names
Of evil powers. Yet one there was who dared
To own the guilt of pity, and to aid
The victims!—but in vain. Of him no more!
He is a traitor, and a traitor's death
Will be his meed.
Con. (*coming forward*). Oh, heaven!—his name, his name. Is it—it cannot be!
Vit. (*starting*). *Thou* here, pale girl!
I deemed thee with the dead! How hast thou 'scaped
The snare! Who saved thee, last of all thy race!
Was it not he of whom I spake e'en now,
Raimond di Procida?
Con. It is enough.
Now the storm breaks upon me, and I sink.
Must he too die?
Vit. Is it e'en so? Why then,
Live on—thou hast the arrow at thy heart!
"Fix not on me thy sad reproachful eyes"—
I mean not to betray thee. Thou mayest live!
Why should death bring thee his oblivious balms!
He visits but the happy. Didst thou ask
If Raimond too must die? It is as sure
As that his blood is on *thy* head, for thou
Didst win him to this treason.
Con. When did men
Call mercy *treason?* Take my life, but save
My noble Raimond!
Vit. Maiden! he must die.
E'en now the youth before his judges stands;
And they are men who, to the voice of prayer,
Are as the rock is to the murmured sigh
Of summer waves!—ay, though a father sit
On their tribunal. Bend thou not to me.
What wouldst thou?
Con. Mercy!—Oh! wert thou to plead
But with a look, e'en yet he might be saved!
If thou hast ever loved—
Vit. If I have loved?
It is *that* love forbids me to relent.
I am what it hath made me. O'er my soul
Lightning hath passed, and seared it. Could I weep
I then might pity—but it will not be.

Con. Oh! thou wilt yet relent, for woman's heart
Was formed to suffer and to melt.
Vit. Away!
Why should I pity thee? Thou wilt but prove
What I have known before—and yet I live!
Nature is strong, and it may all be borne—
The sick impatient yearning of the heart
For that which is not; and the weary sense
Of the dull void, wherewith our homes have been
Circled by death; yes, all things may be borne!
All, save remorse. But I will *not* bow down
My spirit to that dark power; there *was* no guilt!
Anselmo! wherefore didst thou talk of guilt?
Ans. Ay, thus doth sensitive conscience quicken thought,
Lending reproachful voices to a breeze,
Keen lightning to a look.
Vit. Leave me in peace!
Is't not enough that I should have a sense
Of things thou canst not see, all wild and dark,
And of unearthly whispers, haunting me
With dread suggestions, but that *thy* cold words,
Old man, should gall me, too? Must all conspire
Against me?——O thou beautiful spirit! wont
To shine upon my dreams with looks of love,
Where art *thou* vanished? Was it not the thought
Of thee which urged me to the fearful task,
And wilt thou now forsake me? I must seek
The shadowy woods again, for there, perchance,
Still may thy voice be in my twilight paths;
—Here I but meet despair. [*Exit* VITTORIA.
Ans. (*to* CONSTANCE). Despair not *thou*,
My daughter! He that purifies the heart
With grief will lend it strength.
Con. (*endeavoring to rouse herself*). Did she not say
That some one was to die?
Ans. I tell thee not
Thy pangs are vain—for nature will have way.
Earth must have tears: yet in a heart like thine,
Faith may not yield its place.
Con. Have I not heard
Some fearful tale?—Who said that there should rest
Blood on my soul? What blood? I never bore
Hatred, kind father! unto aught that breathes:
Raimond doth know it well. Raimond!—High heaven!
It bursts upon me now! And he must die!
For my sake—e'en for mine!
Ans. Her words were strange,
And her proud mind seemed half to frenzy wrought
—Perchance this may not be.
Con. It *must* not be.
Why do I linger here? [*She rises to depart.*
Ans. Where wouldst thou go?
Con. To give their stern and unrelenting hearts
A victim in his stead.

Ans. Stay! wouldst thou rush
On certain death?
Con. I may not falter now.
—Is not the life of woman all bound up
In her affections? What hath *she* to do
In this bleak world alone? It may be well
For *man* on his triumphal course to move,
Uncumbered by soft bonds; but *we* were born
For love and grief.
Ans. Thou fair and gentle thing,
Unused to meet a glance which doth not speak
Of tenderness or homage! how shouldst *thou*
Bear the hard aspect of unpitying men,
Or face the King of Terrors?
Con. There is strength
Deep-bedded in our hearts, of which we reck
But little, till the shafts of heaven have pierced
Its fragile dwelling. Must not earth be rent
Before her gems are found?—Oh! now I feel
Worthy the generous love which hath not shunned
To look on death for me! My heart hath given
Birth to as deep a courage, and a faith
As high in its devotion. [*Exit* CONSTANCE.
Ans. She is gone!
Is it to perish?—God of mercy! lend
Power to my voice, that so its prayer may save
This pure and lofty creature! I will follow—
But her young footsteps and heroic heart
Will bear her to destruction, faster far
Than I can track her path. [*Exit* ANSELMO.

SCENE III.—*Hall of a Public Building.*

PROCIDA, MONTALBA, GUIDO, *and others seated as on a Tribunal.*

Pro. The morn lowered darkly; but the sun hath now,
With fierce and angry splendor, through the clouds
Burst forth, as if impatient to behold
This our high triumph.—Lead the prisoner in.
[RAIMOND *is brought in, fettered and guarded.*
Why, what a bright and fearless brow is here!
Is this man guilty? Look on him, Montalba!
Mon. Be firm. Should justice falter at a look?
Pro. No, thou sayest well. Her eyes are filleted,
Or should be so. Thou, that dost call thyself—
But no! I will not breathe a traitor's name—
Speak! thou art arraigned of treason.
Raim. I arraign
You, before whom I stand, of darker guilt,
In the bright face of heaven; and your own hearts
Give echo to the charge. Your very looks
Have ta'en the stamp of crime, and seem to shrink,
With a perturbed and haggard wildness, back
From the too-searching light. Why, what hath wrought

This change on noble brows? There is a voice
With a deep answer, rising from the blood
Your hands have coldly shed! Ye are of those
From whom just men recoil with curdling veins,
All thrilled by life's abhorrent consciousness,
And sensitive feeling of a *murderer's* presence.
—Away! come down from your tribunal seat,
Put off your robes of state, and let your mien
Be pale and humbled; for ye bear about you
That which repugnant earth doth sicken at,
More than the pestilence. That I should live
To see my father shrink!

Pro. Montalba, speak!
There's something chokes my voice—but fear me not.

Mon. If we must plead to vindicate our acts,
Be it when thou hast made thine own look clear,
Most eloquent youth! What answer canst thou make
To this our charge of treason?

Raim. I will plead
That cause before a mightier judgment-throne,
Where mercy is not guilt. But here I feel
Too buoyantly the glory and the joy
Of my free spirit's whiteness; for e'en now
The embodied hideousness of crime doth seem
Before me glaring out. Why, I saw *thee*,
Thy foot upon an aged warrior's breast,
Trampling out nature's last convulsive heavings.
And thou *thy* sword—O valiant chief!—is yet
Red from the noble stroke which pierced at once
A mother and the babe, whose little life
Was from her bosom drawn!—Immortal deeds
For bards to hymn!

Gui. (*aside*). I look upon his mien,
And waver. Can it be? My boyish heart
Deemed him so noble once! Away, weak thoughts!
Why should I shrink, as if the guilt were *mine*,
From his proud glance?

Pro. O thou dissembler! thou,
So skilled to clothe with virtue's generous flush
The hollow cheek of cold hypocrisy,
That, with thy guilt made manifest, I can scarce
Believe thee guilty!—look on me, and say
Whose was the secret warning voice, that saved
De Couci with his bands, to join our foes,
And forge new fetters for the indignant land?
Whose was *this* treachery? [*Shows him papers.*
Who hath promised here
(Belike to appease the manès of the dead)
At midnight to unfold Palermo's gates,
And welcome in the foe? Who hath done this,
But thou—a tyrant's friend?

Raim. Who hath done this?
Father!—If I may call thee by that name—
Look, with thy piercing eye, on those whose smiles

Were masks that hid their daggers. *There*, perchance,
May lurk what loves not light too strong. For me,
I know but this—there needs no deep research
To prove the truth that murderers may be traitors,
Even to each other.
Pro. (*to* MONTALBA). His unaltering cheek
Still vividly doth hold its natural hue,
And his eye quails not! Is this innocence?
Mon. No! 'tis the unshrinking hardihood of crime.
—Thou bearest a gallant mien. But where is she
Whom thou hast bartered fame and life to save,
The fair Provençal maid? What! knowest thou not
That this alone were guilt, to death allied?
Was't not our law that he who spared a foe
(And is she not of that detested race?)
Should thenceforth be amongst us *as* a foe!
—Where hast thou borne her?—speak!
Raim. That heaven, whose eye
Burns up thy soul with its far-searching glance,
Is with her: she is safe.
Pro. And by that word
Thy doom is sealed. Oh, God! that I had died
Before this bitter hour, in the full strength
And glory of my heart!

CONSTANCE *enters, and rushes to* RAIMOND.

Con. Oh! art thou found?
—But yet, to find thee thus! Chains, chains for *thee*.
My brave, my noble love! Off with these bonds;
Let him be free as air: for I am come
To be your victim now.
Raim. Death has no pang
More keen than this. Oh! wherefore art thou here?
I could have died so calmly, deeming thee
Saved, and at peace.
Con. At peace!—And thou hast thought
Thus poorly of my love! But woman's breast
Hath strength to suffer too. Thy father sits
On this tribunal; Raimond, which is he?
Raim. My father! who hath lulled thy gentle heart
With that false hope? Beloved! gaze around—
See if thine eye can trace a father's soul
In the dark looks bent on us.
[CONSTANCE, *after earnestly examining the countenances of the Judges, falls at the feet of* PROCIDA.
Con. Thou art he!
Nay, turn thou not away! for I beheld
Thy proud lip quiver, and a watery mist
Pass o'er thy troubled eye; and then I knew
Thou wert his father! Spare him! take *my* life!
In truth, a worthless sacrifice for his,
But yet mine all. Oh! *he* hath still to run
A long bright race of glory.
Raim. Constance, peace!

I look upon thee, and my failing heart
Is as a broken reed.
Con. (*still addressing* PROCIDA). Oh, yet relent
If 'twas his crime to rescue *me*, behold
I come to be the atonement! Let him live
To crown thine age with honor. In thy heart
There's a deep conflict; but great Nature pleads
With an o'ermastering voice, and thou wilt yield!
—Thou *art* his father!
Pro. (*after a pause*). Maiden, thou'rt deceived!
I am as calm as that dead pause of nature
Ere the full thunder bursts. A judge is not
Father or friend. Who calls this man my son?
—*My* son! Ay! thus his mother proudly smiled—
But she was noble! Traitors stand alone,
Loosed from all ties. Why should I trifle thus?
—Bear her away!
Raim. (*starting forward*). And whither?
Mon. Unto death.
Why should she live, when all her race have perished?
Con. (*sinking into the arms of* RAIMOND).
Raimond, farewell! Oh! when thy star hath risen
To its bright noon, forget not, best beloved!
I died for thee.
Raim. High Heaven! thou see'st these things,
And yet endurest them! Shalt thou die for me,
Purest and loveliest being?—but our fate
May not divide us long. Her cheek is cold—
Her deep blue eyes are closed: should this be death
If thus, there yet were mercy! Father, father!
—Is thy heart human?
Pro. Bear her hence, I say!
Why must my soul be torn?

ANSELMO *enters, holding a Crucifix.*

Ans. Now, by this sign
Of heaven's prevailing love! ye shall not harm
One ringlet of her head. How! is there not
Enough of blood upon your burdened souls?
Will not the visions of your midnight couch
Be wild and dark enough, but ye must heap
Crime upon crime? Be ye content: your dreams,
Your councils, and your banquetings, will yet
Be haunted by the voice which doth not sleep,
E'en though this maid be spared! Constance, look up!
Thou shalt not die.
Raim. Oh! death e'en now hath veiled
The light of her soft beauty. Wake, my love!
Wake at my voice.
Pro. Anselmo, lead her hence,
And let her live, but never meet my sight.
—Begone! my heart will burst.
Raim. One last embrace!
—Again life's rose is opening on her cheek;

Yet must we part. So love is crushed on earth!
But there are brighter worlds!—Farewell, farewell!
[*He gives her to the care of* ANSELMO.
Con. (*slowly recovering*). There was a voice which called me.
Am I not
A spirit freed from earth? Have I not passed
The bitterness of death?
Ans. Oh, haste away!
Con. Yes! Raimond calls me. He too is released
From his cold bondage. We are free at last
And all is well. Away!
[*She is led out by* ANSELMO.
Raim. The pang is o'er,
And I have but to die.
Mon. Now, Procida,
Comes thy great task. Wake! summon to thine aid
All thy deep soul's commanding energies;
For thou—a chief among us—must pronounce
The sentence of thy son. It rests with thee.
Pro. Ha! ha! Men's hearts should be of softer mould
Than in the elder time. Fathers could doom
Their children *then* with an unfaltering voice,
And we must tremble thus! Is it not said
That nature grows degenerate, earth being now
So full of days?
Mon. Rouse up thy mighty heart.
Pro. Ay, thou sayst right. There yet are souls which tower
As landmarks to mankind. Well, what's the task?
—There is a man to be condemned, you say?
Is he then guilty?
All. Thus we deem of him,
With one accord.
Pro. And hath he naught to plead?
Raim. Naught but a soul unstained.
Pro. Why, that is little.
Stains on the soul are but as conscience deems them,
And conscience may be seared. But for this sentence!
—Was not the penalty imposed on man,
E'en from creation's dawn, that he must die?
It was: thus making guilt a sacrifice
Unto eternal justice; and we but
Obey heaven's mandate when we cast dark souls
To the elements from among us. Be it so!
Such be *his* doom! I have said. Ay, now my heart
Is girt with adamant, whose cold weight doth press
Its gaspings down. Off! let me breathe in freedom!
—Mountains are on my breast! [*He sinks back.*
Mon. Guards, bear the prisoner
Back to his dungeon.
Raim. Father! oh, look up;
Thou art my father still!
Gui. (*leaving the tribunal, throws himself on the neck of* RAIMOND).
Oh! Raimond, Raimond!

If it should be that I have wronged thee, say
Thou dost forgive me.
Raim. Friend of my young days,
So may all-pitying heaven! [RAIMOND *is led out.*
Pro. Whose voice was that?
Where is he?—gone? Now I may breathe once more
In the free air of heaven. Let us away. [*Exeunt omnes.*

ACT V.

SCENE. I.—*A prison dimly lighted.*

RAIMOND *sleeping*, PROCIDA *enters.*

Pro. (*gazing upon him earnestly*). Can he then sleep?
The o'ershadowing night hath wrapt
Earth at her stated hours; the stars have set
Their burning watch; and all things hold their course
Of wakefulness and rest; yet hath not sleep
Sat on mine eyelids since—but this avails not!
And thus *he* slumbers! "Why, this mien doth seem
As if its soul were but one lofty thought
Of an immortal destiny!"—his brow
Is calm as waves whereon the midnight heavens
Are imaged silently. Wake, Raimond! wake!
Thy rest is deep.
Raim. (*starting up*). My father! Wherefore here?
I am prepared to die, yet would I not
Fall by *thy* hand.
Pro. 'Twas for not *this* I came.
Raim. Then wherefore? and upon thy lofty brow
Why burns the troubled flush?
Pro. Perchance 'tis shame.
Yes, it may well be shame!—for I have striven
With nature's feebleness, and been o'erpowered.
—Howe'er it be, 'tis not for *thee* to gaze,
Noting it thus. Rise, let me loose thy chains.
Arise, and follow me; but let thy step
Fall without sound on earth: I have prepared
The means for thy escape.
Raim. What! *thou!* the austere,
The inflexible Procida! hast *thou* done this,
Deeming me guilty still!
Pro. Upbraid me not!
It is even so. There have been nobler deeds
By Roman fathers done,—but I am weak.
Therefore, again I say, arise! and haste,
For the night wanes. Thy fugitive course must be
To realms beyond the deep; so let us part
In silence, and forever.
Raim. Let *him* fly
Who holds no deep asylum in his breast

Wherein to shelter from the scoffs of men ;
—I can sleep calmly here.
Pro. Art thou in love
With death and infamy, that so thy choice
Is made, lost boy ! when freedom courts thy grasp ?
Raim. Father ! to set the irrevocable seal
Upon that shame wherewith ye have branded me,
There needs but flight. What should I bear from this,
My native land ?—A blighted name, to rise
And part me, with its dark remembrances,
Forever from the sunshine ! O'er my soul
Bright shadowings of a nobler destiny
Float in dim beauty through the gloom ; but here
On earth my hopes are closed.
Pro. *Thy* hopes are closed !
And what were they to mine ?—Thou wilt not fly !
Why, let all traitors flock to thee, and learn
How proudly guilt can talk !—Let fathers rear
Their offspring henceforth, as the free wild-birds,
Foster their young : when these can mount alone,
Dissolving nature's bonds, why should it not
Be so with us ?
Raim. Oh, father ! now I feel
What high prerogatives belong to death.
He hath a deep though voiceless eloquence,
To which I leave my cause. " His solemn veil
Doth with mysterious beauty clothe our virtues,
And in its vast oblivious folds, forever
Give shelter to our faults." When I am gone,
The mists of passion which have dimmed my name
Will melt like day-dreams ; and my memory then
Will be—not what it should have been—for I
Must pass without my fame—but yet unstained
As a clear morning dewdrop. Oh ! the grave
Hath rights inviolate as a sanctuary's,
And they should be my own !
Pro. Now, by just heaven
I will not thus be tortured !—Were my heart
But of thy guilt or innocence assured,
I could be calm again. " But in this wild
Suspense—this conflict and vicissitude
Of opposite feelings and convictions—What !
Hath it been mine to temper and to bend
All spirits to my purpose ! have I raised
With a severe and passionless energy,
From the dread mingling of their elements,
Storms which have rocked the earth ?—and shall I now
Thus fluctuate as a feeble reed, the scorn
And plaything of the winds ?" Look on me, boy !
Guilt never dared to meet these eyes and keep
Its heart's dark secret close.—O pitying heaven !
Speak to my soul with some dread oracle,
And tell me which is truth.
Raim. I will not plead.

I will not call the Omnipotent to attest
My innocence. No, father! in thy heart
I know my birthright shall be soon restored;
Therefore I look to death, and bid thee speed
The great absolver.
Pro. O my son! my son!
We will not part in wrath! The sternest hearts,
Within their proud and guarded fastnesses,
Hide something still, round which their tendrils cling
With a close grasp, unknown to those who dress
Their love in smiles. And such wert thou to me!
The all which taught me that my soul was cast
In nature's mould. And I must now hold on
My desolate course alone! Why, be it thus!
He that doth guide a nation's star, should dwell
High o'er the clouds, in regal solitude,
Sufficient to himself.
Raim. Yet, on the summit,
When with her bright wings glory shadows thee,
Forget not him who coldly sleeps beneath,
Yet might have soared as high!
Pro. No, fear thou not!
Thou'lt be remembered long. The canker worm
O' the heart is ne'er forgotten.
Raim. "Oh! not thus—
I would not *thus* be thought of."
Pro. Let me deem
Again that thou art base!—for thy bright looks,
Thy glorious mien of fearlessness and truth,
Then would not haunt me as the avenging powers
Followed the parricide. Farewell, farewell!
I have no tears. Oh! thus thy mother looked,
When, with a sad, yet half-triumphant smile,
All radiant with deep meaning, from her death-bed
She gave thee to my arms.
Raim. Now death has lost
His sting, since thou believest me innocent!
Pro (*wildly*.) *Thou* innocent! Am I thy murderer, then?
Away! I tell thee thou hast made my name
A scorn to men! No! I will *not* forgive thee;
A traitor! What! the blood of Procida
Filling a traitor's veins? Let the earth drink it.
Thou wouldst receive our foes!—but they shall meet
From thy perfidious lips a welcome, cold
As death can make it. Go, prepare thy soul!
Raim. Father! yet hear me!
Pro. No! thou'rt skilled to make
E'en shame look fair.
Why should I linger thus?
[*Going to leave the prison, he turns back for a moment*
If there be aught—if aught—for which thou needest
Forgiveness—not of me, but that dread power
From whom no heart is veiled—delay thou not
Thy prayer,—time hurries on.

Raim. I am prepared.
Pro. 'Tis well. [*Exit* PROCIDA.
Raim. Men talk of torture !—Can they wreak
Upon the sensitive and shrinking frame,
Half the mind bears and lives ? My spirit feels
Bewildered ; on its powers this twilight gloom
Hangs like a weight of earth. It should be morn ;
Why, then, perchance, a beam of heaven's bright sun
Hath pierced, ere now, the grating of my dungeon,
Telling of hope and mercy ! [*Exit into an inner cell.*

SCENE II.—*A street of Palermo.*

Many Citizens assembled.

1*st Cit.* The morning breaks ; his time his almost come ;
Will he be led this way ?
2*d Cit.* Ay, so 'tis said,
To die before that gate through which he purposed
The foe should enter in !
3*d Cit.* 'Twas a vile plot !
And yet I would my hands were pure as his
From the deep stain of blood. Didst hear the sounds
I' the air last night ?
2*d Cit.* Since the great work of slaughter,
Who hath not heard them duly at those hours
Which should be silent ?
3*d Cit.* Oh ! the fearful mingling,
The terribly mimicry of human voices,
In every sound, which to the heart doth speak
Of woe and death.
2*d Cit.* Ay, there was woman's shrill
And piercing cry ; and the low feeble wail
Of dying infants ; and the half-suppressed
Deep groan of man in his last agonies !
And, now and then, there swelled upon the breeze
Strange, savage bursts of laughter, wilder far
Than all the rest.
1*st Cit.* Of our own fate, perchance,
These awful midnight waitings may be deemed
An ominous prophecy. Should France regain
Her power among us, doubt not, we shall have
Stern reckoners to account with.—Hark !
[*The sound of trumpets heard at a distance.*
2*d Cit.* 'Twas but
A rushing of the breeze.
3*d Cit.* E'en now, 'tis said,
The hostile bands approach.
[*The sound is heard gradually drawing nearer.*
2*d Cit.* Again ! that sound
Was no illusion. Nearer yet it swells—
They come, they come !

PROCIDA *enters.*

Pro. The foe is at your gates ;

But hearts and hands prepared his onset.
Why are ye loitering here?
Cit. My lord, we came—
Pro. Think ye I know not wherefore?—'twas to see
A fellow-being die! Ay, 'tis a sight
Man loves to look on; and the tenderest hearts
Recoil, and yet withdraw not from the scene.
For *this* ye came. What! is our nature fierce,
Or is there that in mortal agony
From which the soul, exulting in its strength,
Doth learn immortal lessons? Hence, and arm!
Ere the night-dews descend, ye will have seen
Enough of death; for this must be a day
Of battle! 'Tis the hour which troubled souls
Delight in, for its rushing storms are wings
Which bear them up! Arm! arm! 'tis for your homes,
And all that lends them loveliness—away! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*prison of* RAIMOND.

RAIMOND, ANSELMO.

Raim. And Constance then is safe! Heaven bless thee, father!
Good angels bear such comfort.
Ans. I have found
A safe asylum for thine honored love,
Where she may dwell until serener days,
With Saint Rosalia's gentlest daughters—those
Whose hallowed office is to tend the bed
Of pain and death, and soothe the parting soul
With their soft hymns: and therefore are they called
"Sisters of Mercy."
Raim. Oh! that name, my Constance.
Befits thee well! E'en in our happiest days
There was a depth of tender pensiveness
Far in thine eyes' dark azure, speaking ever
Of pity and mild grief. Is she at peace?
Ans. Alas! what should I say?
Raim. Why did I ask?
Knowing the deep and full devotedness
Of her young heart's affections? Oh! the thought
Of my untimely fate will haunt her dreams,
Which should have been so tranquil!—and her soul,
Whose strength was but the lofty gift of love,
Even unto death will sicken.
Ans. All that faith
Can yield of comfort, shall assuage her woes;
And still, whate'er betide, the light of heaven
Rests on her gentle heart. But thou, my son!
Is thy young spirit mastered, and prepared
For nature's fearful and mysterious change?
Raim. Ay, father! of my brief remaining task
The least part is to die! And yet the cup
Of life still mantled brightly to my lips,

Crowned with that sparkling bubble, whose proud name
Is—glory! Oh! my soul, from boyhood's morn,
Hath nursed such mighty dreams! It was my hope
To leave a name, whose echo from the abyss
Of time should rise, and float upon the winds
Into the far hereafter; there to be
A trumpet-sound, a voice from the deep tomb,
Murmuring—Awake!—Arise! But this is past!
Erewhile, and it had seemed enough of shame
To sleep *forgotten* in the dust; but now—
Oh God!—the undying record of my grave
Will be—Here sleeps a traitor!—One whose crime
Was—to deem brave men might find nobler weapons
Than the cold murderer's dagger!

Ans. Oh! my son,
Subdue these troubled thoughts! Thou wouldst not change
Thy lot for theirs, o'er whose dark dreams will hang
The avenging shadows, which the blood-stained soul
Doth conjure from the dead!

Raim. Thou'rt right. I would not.
Yet 'tis a weary task to school the heart,
Ere years or griefs have tamed its fiery spirit
Into that still and passive fortitude,
Which is but learned from suffering. Would the hour
To hush these passionate throbbings were at hand!

Ans. It will not be to-day. Hast thou not heard
—But no—the rush, the trampling, and the stir
Of this great city, arming in her haste,
Pierce not these dungeon-depths. The foe hath reached
Our gates, and all Palermo's youth, and all
Her warrior men, are marshalled, and gone forth,
In that high hope which makes realities,
To the red field. Thy father leads them on.

Raim. (*starting up*). They are gone forth! my father leads them on!
All—all Palermo's youth! No! *one* is left,
Shut out from glory's race! They are gone forth!
Ay, now the soul of battle is abroad—
It burns upon the air! The joyous winds
Are tossing warrior-plumes, the proud white foam
Of battle's roaring billows! On my sight
The vision bursts—it maddens! 'tis the flash,
The lightning-shock of lances, and the cloud
Of rushing arrows and the broad full blaze
Of helmets in the sun! The very steed
With his majestic rider glorying shares
The hour's stern joy, and waves his floating mane
As a triumphant banner! Such things are
Even now—and I am here!

Ans. Alas, be calm!
To the same grave ye press,—thou that dost pine
Beneath a weight of chains, and they that rule
The fortunes of the fight.

Raim. Ay! *Thou* canst feel

The calm thou wouldst impart; for unto thee
All men alike, the warrior and the slave,
Seem, as thou sayest, but pilgrims, pressing on
To the same bourne. Yet call it not the same:
Their graves who fall in this day's fight will be
As altars to their country, visited
By fathers with their children, bearing wreaths,
And chanting hymns in honor of the dead:
Will mine be such?

VITTORIA *rushes in wildly, as if pursued.*

Vit. Anselmo! art thou found!
Haste, haste, or all is lost! Perchance thy voice,
Whereby they deem heaven speaks, thy lifted cross,
And prophet mien, may stay the fugitives,
Or shame them back to die.
Ans. The fugitives!
What words are these? The sons of Sicily
Fly not before the foe?
Vit. That I should say
It is too true!
Ans. And thou—thou bleedest, lady!
Vit. Peace! heed not me when Sicily is lost!
I stood upon the walls, and watched our bands,
As, with their ancient royal banner spread,
Onward they marched. The combat was begun,
The fiery impulse given, and valiant men
Had sealed their freedom with their blood—when, lo
That false Alberti led his recreant vassals
To join the invader's host.
Raim. His country's curse
Rest on the slave forever!
Vit. Then distrust,
E'en of their noble leaders, and dismay,
That swift contagion, on Palermo's bands
Came like a deadly blight. They fled!—Oh shame!
E'en now they fly! Ay, through the city gates
They rush, as if all Etna's burning streams
Pursued their wingèd steps!
Raim. Thou hast not named
Their chief—Di Procida—*he* doth not fly?
Vit. No! like a kingly lion in the toils,
Daring the hunters yet, he proudly strives:
But all in vain! The few that breast the storm,
With Guido and Montalba, by his side,
Fight but for graves upon the battle-field.
Raim. And I am *here!* Shall there be power, O God!
In the roused energies of fierce despair,
To burst my heart—and not to rend my chains?
Oh, for one moment of the thunderbolt
To set the strong man free!
Vit. (*after gazing upon him earnestly*). Why, 'twere a deed
Worthy the fame and blessing of all time,
To loose thy bonds, thou son of Procida!

Thou art no traitor!—from thy kindled brow
Looks out thy lofty soul! Arise! go forth!
And rouse the noble heart of Sicily
Unto high deeds again. Anselmo, haste;
Unbind him! Let my spirit still prevail,
Ere I depart—for the strong hand of death
Is on me now. [*She sinks back against a pillar.*
Ans. Oh, heaven! the life-blood streams
Fast from thy heart—thy troubled eyes grow dim.
Who hath done this?
Vit. Before the gates I stood,
And in the name of him, the loved and lost,
With whom I soon shall be, all vainly strove
To stay the shameful flight. Then from the foe,
Fraught with my summons, to his viewless home,
Came the fleet shaft which pierced me.
Ans. Yet, oh yet,
It may not be too late. Help, Help!
Vit. (*to* RAIMOND). Away!
Bright is the hour which brings thee liberty!

Attendants enter.

Haste, be those fetters riven. Unbar the gates,
And set the captive free!
(*The Attendants seem to hesitate*). Know ye not *her*
Who should have worn your country's diadem?
Att. Oh, lady! we obey.
[*They take off* RAIMOND'S *chains. He springs up exultingly.*
Raim. Is this no dream?
Mount, eagle! thou art free! Shall I then die
Not 'midst the mockery of insulting crowds,
But on the field of banners, where the brave
Are striving for an immortality?
It is e'en so! Now for bright arms of proof,
A helm, a keen-edged falchion, and e'en yet
My father may be saved!
Vit. Away, be strong!
And let thy battle-word, to rule the storm,
Be *Conradin.* [*He rushes out.*
Oh! for one hour of life,
To hear that name blent with the exulting shout
Of victory! It will not be! A mightier power
Doth summon me away.
Ans. To purer worlds
Raise thy last thoughts in hope.
Vit. Yes! *he* is there,
All glorious in his beauty!—Conradin!
Death parted us, and death shall reunite!
He will not stay—It is all darkness now!
Night gathers o'er my spirit. [*She dies.*
Ans. She is gone!
It is an awful hour which stills the heart
That beat so proudly once. Have mercy, Heaven!
[*He kneels beside her.*

SCENE IV.—*Before the Gates of Palermo.*

Sicilians flying tumultuously towards the Gates.

Voices (without). Montjoy! Montjoy! St. Denis for Anjou! Provençals, on!

Sicilians. Fly, fly, or all is lost!

[RAIMOND *appears in the gateway, armed, and carrying a banner.*

Raim. Back, back, I say! ye men of Sicily!
All is not lost! Oh! shame! A few brave hearts
In such a cause, ere now, have set their breasts
Against the rush of thousands, and sustained,
And made the shock recoil. Ay, man, free man,
Still to be called so, hath achieved such deeds
As heaven and earth have marvelled at; and souls,
Whose spark yet slumbers with the days to come,
Shall burn to hear, transmitting brightly thus
Freedom from race to race! Back! or prepare
Amidst your hearths, your bowers, your very shrines,
To bleed and die in vain! Turn!—follow me!
"Conradin, Conradin!"—for Sicily
His spirit fights! Remember "Conradin!"
[*They begin to rally round him.*
Ay this is well!—Now, follow me, and charge!
[*The Provençals rush in, but are repulsed by the Sicilians.—Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—*Part of the Field of Battle.*

MONTALBA *enters, wounded, and supported by* RAIMOND, *whose face is concealed by his helmet.*

Raim. Here rest thee, warrior.
Mon. Rest! Ay, death is rest,
And such will soon be mine. But, thanks to *thee*,
I shall not die a captive. Brave Sicilian,
These lips are all unused to soothing words,
Or I should bless the valor which hath won,
For my last hour, the proud free solitude
Wherewith my soul would gird itself. Thy name?
Raim. 'Twill be no music to thine ear, Montalba.
Gaze—read it thus! [*He lifts the visor of his helmet.*
Mon. Raimond di Procida!
Raim. Thou hast pursued me with a bitter hate;
But fare thee well! Heaven's peace be with thy soul!
I must away. One glorious effort more,
And this proud field is won. [*Exit* RAIMOND.
Mon. Am I thus humbled?
How my heart sinks within me! But 'tis death
(And he can tame the mightiest) hath subdued
My towering nature thus? Yet is he welcome!
That youth—'twas in his pride he rescued me!

I was his deadliest foe, and thus he proved
His fearless scorn. Ha! ha! but he shall fail
To melt me into womanish feebleness.
There I still baffle him—the grave shall seal
My lips forever—mortal shall not hear
Montalba say—"*forgive!*" [*He dies.*

SCENE VI.—*Another part of the field.*

PROCIDA, GUIDO, *and other Sicilians.*

Pro. The day is ours; but he, the brave unknown
Who turned the tide of battle—he whose path
Was victory—who hath seen him?

ALBERTI *is brought in, wounded and fettered.*

Alb. Procida!
Pro. Be silent, traitor! Bear him from my sight,
Unto your deepest dungeons.
Alb. In the grave
A nearer home awaits me. Yet one word
Ere my voice fail—thy son——
Pro. Speak, speak!
Alb. Thy son
Knows not a thought of guilt. That trait'rous plot
Was mine alone. [*He is led away.*
Pro. Attest it, earth and heaven!
My son is guiltless! Hear it, Sicily!
The blood of Procida is noble still!
My son! He lives, he lives! His voice shall speak
Forgiveness to his sire! His name shall cast
Its brightness o'er my soul!
Gui. O day of joy!
The brother of my heart is worthy still
The lofty name he bears.

ANSELMO *enters.*

Pro. Anselmo, welcome!
In a glad hour we meet; for know, my son
Is guiltless.
Ans. And victorious! By his arm
All hath been rescued.
Pro. How!—the unknown——
Ans. Was he!
Thy noble Raimond!—by Vittoria's hand
Freed from his bondage, in that awful hour
When all was flight and terror.
Pro. Now my cup
Of joy too brightly mantles! Let me press
My warrior to a father's heart—and die;
For life hath nought beyond. Why comes he not?
Anselmo, lead me to my valiant boy!
Ans. Temper this proud delight.

Pro. What means that look?
He hath not fallen?
Ans. He lives.
Pro. Away, away!
Bid the wide city with triumphal pomp
Prepare to greet her victor. Let this hour
Atone for all his wrongs! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII.—*Garden of a Convent.*

RAIMOND *is led in wounded, leaning on Attendants.*

Raim. Bear me to no dull couch, but let me die
In the bright face of nature! Lift my helm,
That I may look on heaven.
1*st Att.* (*to* 2*d Attendant*). Lay him to rest
On this green sunny bank, and I will call
Some holy sister to his aid; but thou
Return unto the field, for high-born men
There need the peasant's aid. [*Exit* 2*d Attendant.*
(*To Raim.*) Here gentle hands
Shall tend thee, warrior; for, in these retreats,
They dwell whose vows devote them to the care
Of all that suffer. Mayst thou live to bless them!
[*Exit* 1*st Attendant.*
Raim. Thus have I wished to die! 'Twas a proud strife!
My father blessed the unknown who rescued him,
(Blessed him, alas, because unknown!) and Guido,
Beside me bravely struggling, called aloud,
"Noble Sicilian, on!" Oh! had they deemed
'Twas I who led that rescue, they had spurned
Mine aid, though 'twas deliverance; and their looks
Had fallen like blights upon me. There is one,
Whose eye ne'er turned on mine but its blue light
Grew softer, trembling through the dewy mist
Raised by deep tenderness! Oh, might the soul,
Set in that eye, shine on me ere I perish!
—Is't not her voice?

CONSTANCE *enters speaking to a Nun, who turns into another path.*

Con. O! happy they, kind sister,
Whom thus ye tend; for it is theirs to fall
With brave men side by side, when the roused heart
Beats proudly to the last! There are high souls
Whose hope was such a death, and 'tis denied!
[*She approaches* RAIMOND.
Young warrior, is there aught——*Thou* here, my Raimond!
Thou here—and thus! Oh! is this joy or woe?
Raim. Joy! be it joy, my own, my blessèd love!
E'en on the grave's dim verge. Yes! it *is* joy!
My Constance! victors have been crowned ere now,
With the green shining laurel, when their brows
Wore death's own impress—and it may be thus

E'en yet, with me! They freed me, when the foe
Had half prevailed, and I have proudly earned,
With my heart's dearest blood, the meed to die
Within thine arms.
Con. Oh! speak not thus—to die!
These wounds may yet be closed.
[*She attempts to bind his wounds.*
Look on me, love!
Why, there is *more* than life in thy glad mien—
'Tis full of hope! and from thy kindled eye
Breaks e'en unwonted light, whose ardent ray
Seems born to be immortal!
Raim. 'Tis e'en so!
The parting soul doth gather all her fires
Around her; all her glorious hopes, and dreams,
And burning aspirations, to illume
The shadowy dimness of the untrodden path
Which lies before her; and encircled thus,
Awhile she sits in dying eyes, and thence
Sends forth her bright farewell. Thy gentle cares
Are vain, and yet I bless them.
Con. Say not vain;
The dying look not thus. We shall not part!
Raim. I have seen death ere now, and known him wear
Full many a changeful aspect.
Con. Oh! but none
Radiant as thine, my warrior! Thou wilt live!
Look round thee!—all is sunshine—is not this
A smiling world?
Raim. Ay, gentlest love, a world
Of joyous beauty and magnificence,
Almost too fair to leave! Yet must we tame
Our ardent hearts to this! Oh, weep thou not.
There is no home for liberty, or love,
Beneath these festal skies! Be not deceived!
My way lies far beyond! I shall be soon
That viewless thing, which, with its mortal weeds
Casting off meaner passions, yet, we trust,
Forgets not how to love!
Con. And must this be?
Heaven, thou art merciful!—Oh! bid our souls
Depart together!
Raim. Constance! there is strength
Within thy gentle heart, which hath been proved
Nobly, for me; arouse it once again!
Thy grief unmans me—and I fain would meet
That which approaches, as a brave man yields
With proud submission to a mightier foe.
—It is upon me now!
Con. I will be calm.
Let thy head rest upon my bosom, Raimond,
And I will so suppress its quick deep sobs,
They shall but rock thee to thy rest. There is
A world (ay, let us seek it!) where no blight

Falls on the beautiful rose of youth, and there
I shall be with thee soon!

PROCIDA *and* ANSELMO *enter.* PROCIDA, *on seeing* RAIMOND, *starts back.*

Ans. Lift up thy head,
Brave youth, exultingly! for lo! thine hour
Of glory comes! Oh! doth it come too late?
E'en now the false Alberti hath confessed
That guilty plot, for which thy life was doomed
To be the atonement.
Raim. 'Tis enough! Rejoice,
Rejoice, my Constance! for I leave a name
O'er which thou mayest weep proudly! [*He sinks back.*
To thy breast
Fold me yet closer, for an icy dart
Hath touched my veins.
Con. And must thou leave me, Raimond?
Alas! thine eye grows dim—its wandering glance
Is full of dreams.
Raim. Haste, haste, and tell my father
I was no traitor!
Pro. (*rushing forward*). To that father's heart
Return, forgiving all thy wrongs—return!
Speak to me, Raimond!—Thou wert ever kind,
And brave, and gentle! Say that all the past
Shall be forgiven! That word from none but thee
My lips e'er asked—Speak to me once, my boy,
My pride, my hope! And is it with thee thus?
Look on me yet!—Oh! must this woe be borne?
Raim. Off with this weight of chains! it is not meet
For a crowned conqueror!—Hark! the trumpet's voice!
[*A sound of triumphant music is heard gradually approaching.*
Is't not a thrilling call? What drowsy spell
Benumbs me thus?—Hence! I am free again!
Now swell your festal strains—the field is won!
Sing me to glorious dreams. [*He dies.*
Ans. The strife is past;
There fled a noble spirit!
Con. Hush! he sleeps—
Disturb him not!
Ans. Alas! this is no sleep
From which the eye doth radiantly unclose.
Bow down thy soul, for earthly hope is o'er!
[*The music continues approaching.* GUIDO *enters, with Citizens and Soldiers.*
Gui. The shrines are decked, the festive torches blaze—
Where is our brave deliverer? We are come
To crown Palermo's victor!
Ans. Ye come too late.
The voice of human praise doth send no echo
Into the world of spirits. [*The music ceases.*
Pro. (*after a pause*). Is this dust
I look on—Raimond? 'Tis but sleep!—a smile

On his pale cheek sits proudly. Raimond, wake!
Oh, God! and this was his triumphant day!
My son, my injured son!
Con. (*starting*). Art *thou* his father?
I know thee now. Hence! with thy dark stern eye,
And thy cold heart! Thou canst not waken him now!
Away! he will not answer but to me—
For none like me hath loved him! He is mine!
Ye shall not rend him from me.
Pro. Oh! he *knew*
Thy love, poor maid! Shrink from me now no more!
He knew *thy* heart—but who shall tell him now
The depth, the intenseness, and the agony
Of my suppressed affection? I have learned
All his high worth in time to deck his grave.
Is there not power in the strong spirit's woe
To force an answer from the viewless world
Of the departed? Raimond!—speak!—forgive!
Raimond! my victor, my deliverer! hear!
Why, what a world is this! Truth ever bursts
On the dark soul too late: and glory crowns
The unconscious dead. There comes an hour to break
The mightiest hearts!—My son! my son! is this
A day of triumph! Ay, for thee alone!

[*He throws himself upon the body of* RAIMOND.
Curtain falls.

THE END

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